PRIVATE TUITION AND THE 11-PLUS : AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL EXTENDED LITERATURE REVIEW WITH UK AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

by

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ABSTRACT

The private tuition industry stands out as one of the major growth industries of the 21st Century. According to Hajar, private tuition has expanded to the extent it is now a "global phenomenon" (2018, P.514). Private tuition operates alongside regular schooling and can either reflect the curriculum exactly or be based upon it. This paper focuses on several distinct but interconnected areas of literature that span across 7 Countries (representing East to West) in order to provide fresh global perspectives to this area. First, it considers a number of different national viewpoints towards private tuition or 'shadow education' as it is also commonly known, and in particular, notices a disparity in approach between the UK compared to many other countries, particularly Japan and India, with private tuition in the former being largely focused on the preparation for high-stake tests such as the 11-plus; whereas in the latter, private tuition is often seen more as a remedial service (though this is changing) for students that have fallen behind their peers academically, and in more general terms, is far more integrated into broader society. The second primary focus of this paper specifically relates to the 11-plus examinations in the UK and the variations across different counties and the varying contexts behind the 11-plus examinations. The third focus of this paper is on the role and impact of private tuition on 11-plus outcomes. In the final part of this paper, the paper reasons that private tuition in the UK is indeed the 'secret weapon' of wealthier families, and is utilised as an important, if not central, part of the entrance examination arsenal. This thesis posits on what this could mean for future approaches to private tuition and the private tuition industry in the UK and makes several recommendations.

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More specifically, I would like to thank my supervisor Alan Bainbridge. Having read some of your prior work I was concerned that on an intellectual level I would have my work cut out. While that was certainly the case thank you for impressing on me the importance of finding your own way and being comfortable in your own approach – rather than just taking the road most oft travelled. To my other supervisor Gemma Van Vuuren-Cassar, I am grateful for your distinct perspectives and ability to refine the storm of ideas that represented this paper at first attempt into something far clearer and more accessible. Finally, to my educational *alma mater* Canterbury Christ Church University for providing another stimulating and well-run course of study.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Private tuition has been labelled as the "hidden secret of British education" and is an industry estimated to be worth up to £2bn per year in the UK (The Sutton Trust, 2016, P.2). Private tuition is also increasingly popular, with research from the Sutton Trust (date) finding that 27% of 11–16-year-old children have received private tuition, which rises to 41% in London – the Trust also recommend that all students receive a minimum of ten hours test preparation. When compared on the basis of income, 34% of richer homes have had tutoring compared to 20% from poorer homes (The Sutton Trust, 2019). Recent surveys conducted by the Sutton Trust in 2019 as well as the workings of Jerrim (2017) and Allen et al., (2017) illustrate that 28% of private tuition is sought to have the sole aim of improving the likelihood a child will perform to a high enough standard on the 11-plus to gain a grammar school place, with 69% of those surveyed also stating that a 'good education is the key to success' (Jerrim, 2017). As a former teacher and specialist entrance examination tutor, I can appreciate why private tuition remains the 'elephant in the room'. However, it is the author's contention that it is now high-time to shine a brighter light on the often secret (and lucrative) world of private tuition and its role in the 11-plus.

To this end, I wanted to explore the following research questions:

1 Whether private tuition in the UK is becoming more popular, and the extent to which reflects broader global trends;

2 Whether students from 'advantaged' or affluent backgrounds are more likely to receive private tuition than their disadvantaged peers;

3 Whether students receiving private tuition perform better than students not receiving private tuition and were therefore more likely to win places at grammar schools;

4. Whether the current state of affairs inhibits social mobility, both in relation to the lack of access to private tuition for disadvantaged students and in their lack of access to 'quality' private tuition.

The difficulty faced immediately was in the form and nature of the research methodology, what research paradigm would be best adopted, and how to address, consider and reflect upon my own experiences and knowledge, and how this could both limit and bolster the research process and outcomes. Given my first-hand experience of this sector, and the different types of academic literature present (quantitative and qualitative), I wanted to utilise a research methodology which would permit both my own experiences and the different types of literature to be used. While there is much academic debate around whether this approach is even possible, or whether it constitutes a 'mixed method' or otherwise, I will draw from both an interpretivist and post-positivist paradigm which allows both the autobiographical and qualitative side to this thesis and the quantitative and analytical side. Thankfully, within the academic discourse on research methodology a solution to this obvious conflict or 'paradigm problem' (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) is provided – which sidesteps the contentiousness of conflicting paradigms that assert sanctity of their views, simply by ignoring it (the 'a-paradigmatic' stance) or allowing both paradigms to exist concurrently (the 'multiple paradigm' stance.) Therefore, this paper will adopt a dialectical multiple-paradigm thesis model to resolve the conflict as it allows the mixing of paradigms to gain insights (Greene, 2007, p12). More details of this approach alongside the broader ontology, epistemology and methodology will be explored in the research methodology section of this thesis.

In a typical master's thesis, a number of research objectives are first outlined alongside a description of the tools and parameters by which they will be met, with the reader left to wait for the outcome. Instead, I have instead adopted a different approach from the usual academic convention and have drawn inspiration from my legal background, by setting out an early rationale and series of key focal areas at the offset. This is for a number of reasons – it invites a level of inductive reasoning while at the same time providing a useful end gauge by which the journey can be tethered – thus enabling the reader to better devote their intellectual energy and reasoning skills along the way, safe in the knowledge of the intended destination, instead of having a conclusion sprung on them 100 pages in which may only have a tenuous link to the actual research objectives explored – known as ‘signposting’

Therefore, in my approach, akin to a courtroom where the jury already know the crime by which the defendant is accused from the offset and the standard of proof which must be met for them to be found guilty, I also make early conclusions and then invite the reader to consider these against evidence in the literature and the perspectives from my own experience and insight and readily test it against their own views, predispositions and the nexus of reasoning and logic at your disposal. This I feel is a more logical way to approach academic discourse and this is especially the case for topical, popular areas such as those concerning this thesis.

Therefore, this paper draws the reader’s attention to the following four key research outcomes:

1 Private tuition in the UK is becoming increasingly popular, which is reflected in global trends, and is being used progressively more as an effective (but costly) answer to the challenges of high-stake examinations such as the 11-plus;
2 That students from ‘advantaged’ or affluent backgrounds are more likely to receive private tuition than their disadvantaged peers;
3 That students receiving private tuition perform better than students not receiving private tuition and are therefore more likely to win places at grammar schools;
4 That the current state of affairs inhibits social mobility which is not desirable, both in relation to the lack of access to private tuition for disadvantaged students, but also the lack of access to ‘quality’ private tuition.

To these ends, this thesis makes the following assumptions throughout, which while the author recognises some are contentious in and of themselves, they have been adopted in the interests of brevity: academic 'success' is attainment as measured by examination grades; that the curriculum is predominantly knowledge based and tested as such; that generally, a student would achieve greater levels of success at a grammar school than a local non-selective school, or at least the perception is as such; that 'private tuition' is conducted one-to-one or in small groups by a qualified teaching professional or appropriately experienced professional tutor, as opposed to large group tuition.

While a number of these assumptions, if not all, are open to or are the subject of conflicting approaches or debates such that no consensus presides, this paper lacks the word allowance to consider them in detail without departing from the central thesis, that the rise of private tuition undermines access to selective schooling for disadvantaged students, though these will be explored in some detail later. However, this paper does maintain a significant strength (and limitation) in the dialectical approach in that it can include the author's personal experience within this field that forms the basis of the novel approach (given the inclusion of the author's unique experiences) that the author seeks to adopt in this paper.

With the above setting the context of this thesis, this paper will now turn to explore a number of its key sources in more detail. Given that much of the research cited in this paper is from the Sutton Trust, and that it provides a useful source of insight into the field that will be utilised often throughout this paper, a contextualisation and short background of the Sutton Trust will be provided. The Sutton Trust was founded in 1997 by Sir Peter Lampl with the aim of bringing social mobility to the forefront of education in the UK. In an effort to achieve this the Trust have established an extensive summer school system that encourages those from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend more selective universities such as those in the 'Russell Group'. They also author regular reports regarding the social mobility issues present within the UK. Sir Peter

Lampl has historically provided the majority of the funding required by the Trust – though more recently the Trust has received considerable private investment, including investment from the banking sector. According to the Boston Consulting Group, for every £1 invested, beneficiaries of the Sutton Trust's programmes realise £15 of value (Boston Consulting Group, 2008). In 2011, the government also granted the Trust £135 million to form the Education Endowment Fund (alongside Impetus) which had the aim of improving disadvantaged student attainment within schools, through looking at the provision of a number of educational solutions such as providing 'evidenced based resources' to inform the practice of teachers, and investing in research and projects that aim to improve impact on educational outcomes for disadvantaged students (EEF, 2021)

However, despite these initiatives, there have been concerns expressed that the private tuition system inhibits 'bright but poor' or 'capable but disadvantaged' students from winning places at grammar schools (Jerrim, 2017, P.5) – my approach to defining 'disadvantaged' will be set out later in this paragraph and explored in greater detail later in this thesis. Moreover, within the academic realm it is generally accepted that a student can suffer from income poverty, lack of social and cultural capital, and autonomy. Establishing parameters in light of these different factors is performed by targeting characteristics which often give rise to deficits in the above-mentioned areas such as those in state care, receiving free school meals and having parents in the armed forces (Department for Education, 2020), whilst the receipt of free school meals are generally welcomed, approximately one in three students identified as embarrassment as a key reason for not taking their free meals (Storey & Chamberlin, 2001).

However, accessing these premiums set aside for disadvantaged students is not as easy as it first appears due to the complex nature of a 'disadvantaged' status, given the many variables at play and the lack of a broadly accepted definition Thus, this thesis draws reference from the Department of Education to establish the working definition of 'disadvantaged students' to be used throughout this thesis as: pupils who are currently eligible, or have been in the past 6 years, for free school meals. It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this definition – as Gorard and Siddiqui point out, FSM eligibility is not a constant characteristic (Gorard, S. and Siddiqui, N, 2019, p.1) and does not reflect the 'hidden poor' that are students previously eligible for FSM but who are no longer eligible, but still may be suffering the impacts of earlier disadvantage (Noden and West, 2009, p.4).

Given recent high-profile bans (The Independent, 2018) on both state and private schools in Kent from performing 11-plus exam preparation which forbid 11-plus examination preparation there are concerns that but for private tuition, these students would not have exposure to key parts of the 11-plus examination. For example, despite the ban on coaching 11-plus entry that was applied to both state and independent schools, private investigations found these restrictions were largely ignored by the independent schools in Kent (The Independent, 2018). This provides a basis for discussion on whether Grammar schools are doing enough to provide more disadvantaged students the opportunity to pass the 11-plus examinations, and whether the primary schools could be doing more. In areas where competition is especially high, preparation becomes the main tool available to students to gain that competitive edge over their peers, which commonly comes in the form of private tuition targeted at the different aspects of the 11-plus examination, despite the broadly ridiculed claims that they are 'tutor proof'.

The 11-plus exam can include questions from the topic areas of Verbal Reasoning, Non-Verbal Reasoning, Mathematics and English – though the extent to which these are included varies between exams and schools (Burrill, 2019). Some grammars decide to include mathematical and linguistic curricula-based questions whilst others entirely exclude them as is the case for several grammars within the North Yorkshire regions (such as Ripon Grammar School). Despite the format of the 11-plus exams throughout the UK varying considerably, this attracts different criticisms such as claims that the weighted portion of the mark relating to reasoning questions, in which denominations of verbal, non-verbal and spatial reasoning questions are established, are too excessive resulting in the 11-plus being a 'loaded dice' (Allen and Bartley, 2017)). Moreover, the reliance on reasoning questions may allow differing socio-economic conditions to permeate the 11-plus exam (J. Richard Hackman and Katz, 2010) Also, these types of questions do not fall within the remit of the traditional mainstream schooling curriculum which aims to provide "pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens" (Department for Education, 2014, p.6) – in that being predominantly knowledge based there is little emphasis, if any, on denominations of verbal, non-verbal and spatial type reasoning. Indeed, while there is still academic dispute over whether reasoning skills can be improved, increasing the exposure to these types of questions will still build confidence which could provide an advantage over those not exposed to those type of question (Hartatiana et al., 2017).

Consequently, exposure to these types of questions via private tuition quickly accelerate the wealth disparity between more affluent families and those from a low socio-economic background due their ability or inability to purchase tuition (Allen et al., 2017). This arises from the implementation and expense of private tuition into the preparation of students sitting the exam – those able to access private tuition in preparation for sitting the exam are significantly more likely to score higher than similarly achieving students who had not been in receipt of private tuition or similar preparation (Bunting, B., & Mooney, E.,2001). Indeed, or private primary schools that are not obliged to follow the national curriculum, more focus could be placed on these types of topics and specific exam preparation undertaken, alongside the provision of specialist 11-plus exam coaching revision sessions.

While there are of course a great many approaches to what a curriculum is, or should do, or even how schooling 'success' can or should be measured, these fall outside the scope of this thesis, which instead adopts the current Department of Education approach to schooling curriculum which is predominantly knowledge based, with 'success' being predominantly exam outcome or achievement based. Questions derived from the mathematical and English components of the mainstream school curriculum are utilised to varying degrees across the 11-plus across the country although there is no necessity for the inclusion of such (Burrill, 2019).

In the context of this research which concerns the 11-plus entrance exams to grammar schools, if private tuition is to be considered as important, if not the most important weapon in the 11+ preparatory educational arsenal, this paper sets out to explore on what basis this is achieved and what safeguards (if any) should be put in place, and under what rationale. At an elementary level, if the school curriculum is designed to prepare pupils "for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life" then private tuition might be considered as a catalyst to either access the means to an increased exposure to the taught curriculum or in complimenting the educational outcome (or both) (Department for Education, 2014). Whether students at grammar schools actually achieve more in terms of attainment compared to students at non-selective state schools remains a topic of intense academic debate, with recent research from Durham University suggesting that the apparent success of grammar schools is purely down to grammar school students deriving from more advantaged social backgrounds and already having higher academic attainment levels at age 11 (Gorard & Siddiqui, 2018). And yet, the perception is that grammar schools present better opportunities and outcomes for students, this paper will proceed under the assumption that grammar schools provide superior attainment outcomes than non-selective state schools. Indeed, research by Bainbridge, Bartley and Troppe (Bartley, 2021) that investigated how Members of Parliament respond to evidence in relation to secondary selective education, found that 'grammar schools' were perceived as 'good' or 'outstanding' are a rate of 235% compared to 'comprehensive schools' at 1.7%

This is of course just one perspective. So, in order to exhibit the difference in perception towards private tuition and education across the globe, which due to globalisation generally will help to inform our own understanding and approach to private tuition in the UK, a broad review of the literature will be undertaken which will begin in the East and finish in the West, to better inform our own situation. Indeed, this approach has a historical basis. In the East, the spread of Confucianism, or Ruism (from the Chinese *rú* 儒 meaning 'scholar' or 'to educate') underlined the historical development of the cultural and philosophical approaches to education and private tuition – which then spread along the 'silk roads' to the West – an approach reflected in the structure of the literature review. This is considered against wider perspectives on private tuition and the shadow education sector, defined by Zhang & Bray (Zhang and Bray, 2016) as "private supplementary tutoring beyond the hours of formal schooling", such as from countries like Japan, South Korea, India, Nepal, Azerbaijan, England and Wales and the United States. These Countries deliberately reflect an 'East to West' approach, given that 'schooling' as a notion was said to have first arisen in Europe from the King of the Franks, Charlemagne, in or around the 7th Century; whereas in the Far East, schooling and private tuition trace (at least) as far back as the Shang and Zhou dynasties (1600-256 BCE). For reference, the Hellenistic period which saw Alexander the Great and perhaps the most famous royal tutor, Aristotle, ended in 323 BCE – around a millennium later!

In the next part, the paper then briefly courses the historical development of the 11-plus in England and the prevalence of grammar schools, finding that much of the criticism and controversy around the 11-plus today can draw historical parallels, especially around the criticism of the 11-plus system (today and historically) such as the former Headmaster of Manchester Grammar School Dr Stephen historically declaring that any student attempting the verbal reasoning element of the examination without prior practice wouldn't have a "hope in hell" of passing (The Guardian, 2017). Likewise, this area has also been of historical interest with common themes arising, such as with the likes of JWB Douglas and his team that considered the Education Act 1944 and Grammar school entrance results to better "understand what underlies the complex of attitudes favourable to educational and social mobility" (Douglas, 1964). Such historical ties are able to be correlated to experiences and statistics arising from elsewhere around the globe and enable us to better deduce whether, for example, issues around social mobility are aggravated by the provision of private tuition and to what extent this may be by comparing to countries where private tuition is outlawed, such as the United Arab Emirates, where private tutors can be imprisoned and families fined 50,000 Dirham (£10,400) (Nafie, 2020) This can then be used to inform national policy.

The paper will then turn to consider, explore, and evaluate any county variation in their approach to score, administer or format the 11-plus exam in light of the social mobility issues voiced by the Sutton Trust and other academics and organisations such as Jerrim, the EEF, Impetus and Perera and Treadaway (2016) as this may provide useful insight into the extent to which provisions are currently being provided for disadvantaged students – these will act as the foundations to devise appropriate future recommendations for the greater consideration of disadvantaged students within the UK education system. Subsequently, the impact of private tuition on educational outcomes for students sitting the 11-plus will be explored to the extent that it illustrates a huge variation in GCSE achievement, approximately a +24.8 attainment gap (Perera and Treadaway, 2016) equating to half a GCSE grade in eight different subjects, between similar students with differing levels of access to private tuition (National Audit Office 2015; Sutton Trust, 2016; Andrews et al., 2016). It considers the potential existence of any correlation between private tuition, demographics, and exam outcomes in the UK.

Naturally, these areas raise important social mobility issues, as if capable but poor students are unable to access tuition - their academic attainment may be undermined compared to students from already privileged backgrounds. Disadvantaged students already receive less additional schoolwork (1.3 hours difference) and 18% less support with their homework from parents, when compared to more advantaged students (Jerrim, 2020, p. 20). Likewise, with recent figures suggesting that 80% of disadvantaged students lack access to 'quality' private tuition (EEF, 2020) this thesis ponders on the implications of this, and critically considers the recent literature such as from Walker, Nelson, Bradshaw and Brown (2019) in this area that encompasses a number of mooted suggestions and solutions that are designed to counteract many of the concerns regarding insufficient funding and geographical access to private tuition. For example, Action Tutoring have matched high-achieving professional volunteers with disadvantaged students, with a number of other organisations looking at developing quality elearning solutions (EEF, 2020). While 'quality' is a term not expounded on by the EEF, this thesis will adopt quality as meaning access to a private tutor that is a qualified teaching professional in an individual or small group setting; as opposed to large group tuition or tutoring undertaken by tutors of similar age and qualification of the student (known as peer tutoring) which are generally considered less optimal for student outcomes (EEF, 2020).

The literature review's final focus will be directed towards the disproportionate impacts on educational attainment that disadvantaged students suffer as a result of their family's socio-economic background within an education system that by design favours the wealthy and affluent (and their children). Concerningly, these impacts generally persist around the globe irrespective of attitudes or culture ultimately resulting in disadvantaged students being significantly afforded less consideration - thus stagnating social mobility for those originating from that background (OECD, 2012; Silova, 2009; Kim and Lee, 2010). Recent circumstances have further extenuated this achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students given the virtual shift the mainstream education sector has undergone towards an almost entirely online deliverance. Covid-19 resulted in school closures across the globe including the UK, meaning that access to formal face-to-face education ceased periodically and generally only existed in the form of digital schoolwork and online teaching.

However, for households that do not have access to a computer or internet this type of schoolwork was not accessible (in some schools, up to 40% of children to not have a home computer or laptop) (Wakefield, 2021) – and for those with limited access, this could have been prioritised for parents or other family members that were obliged to work from home in response to the coronavirus outbreak. For example, only 16% of students from working-class families were found to have joined online classes compared to almost double that of those from middle-class families (these are still not majority proportions) with that number significantly increasing for those in private or selective education (Sutton Trust, 2020a). Moreover, those from a low socio-economic background are likely to suffer most from school closures both in the short and long-term, with any significant time away from schooling (e.g. school summer holidays) potentially widening the attainment gap - so with school closures now in excess of three months this gap is likely to be the widest it has previously been and, according to many social mobility charities, reverse much of the hard work done previously in reducing this attainment gap (Sutton Trust, 2020b).

Many middle- and upper-class families have turned to private tuition as their support system (Lampl, 2016), with tuition typically taking the form of one-on-one online teaching (Zoom or Skype classroom meetings). This further compounds the attainment gap, as not only is private tuition known to be "effective, delivering approximately five additional months' progress on average" (Education Endowment Foundation, 2018) but those not accessing private tuition also tend to be of the same socio-economic group that are not accessing the digital content or classes provided by their schools (IFS, 2020). Indeed, greater numbers of affluent families have been found to be accessing online private tuition since the beginning of 'lockdown', with now one in four of these students regularly accessing this resource (Sutton Trust, 2020a, p.7). Many schools in deprived areas have been unable equalise this gap as only 15% of these schools have provided disadvantaged students with technological devices which could assist their home learning compared to 28% of advantaged schools who have provided these devices to their students (Ibid, p.1). How such issues may be resolved in schools in deprived areas remains in contention, albeit some charities and organisations have developed schemes such as the 'Bridge the Divide' program to increase the availability of laptops in such needed areas (Wakefield, 2021). While an accurate estimate of the impact this severance from mandated education will have on disadvantaged students cannot be determined yet - work is currently being undertaken by the EEF with results expected towards the end of 2020.

Nonetheless, it is evident that new provisions will need to be made in order to close this gap, however the way in which the UK intends to tackle this has not been made abundantly clear, as while an extra £650m of state primary and secondary funding has been promised to help pupils catch up on education missed as a result of the global pandemic (Department of Education, 2020), the Department of Education has indicated that headteachers would have the discretion over how the additional money is spent (which equates to £91 per pupil).

The novel solution currently provided by the UK government is the National Tutoring Programme (EEF, 2021) in which the government outline their intention to provide schools a "government-funded, sector-led" tuition programme which is specifically designed to support the disadvantaged students who suffered the most from Covid-19 (£350 million has been designated for this initiative to certain organisations such as the EEF, Impetus and Nesta to distribute). Indeed, in a recent project evaluation funded by Nesta which paid £196,499 for maths tuition from 'low cost' maths graduates in India and Sri Lanka to students in year 6, the study found "no evidence that the intervention had an impact on Key Stage 2 maths, compared to 'business as usual' teaching and support in Year 6 – with no differential impact on pupils who were eligible for free school meals who accessed more tutoring sessions (EEF, 2018, p.1). Conversely, in another EEF project study involving the Tutor Trust (which utilises UK university students as paid tutors) the trial found that children who received additional tutoring in small grounds of 3 students from the Tutor Trust made three months' additional progress in Key Stage 2 maths.

In addition to this, the government also plan to provide a further £650 million for a "catch up premium" which will target those from disadvantaged backgrounds who are at risk of falling behind to such an extent it will become unrecoverable without intervention (Department for Education, 2020). The efficacy of this solution will remain shrouded until its practical implementation, with such a sum of money being directed towards the practice of private tuition it is increasingly important to fully understand the impacts of tuition of not only the students engaging in it but also their peers for the most disadvantaged backgrounds that may be unable to access it. In terms of the £350m for the National Tutoring Programme which is designed to provide disadvantaged students with free access to private tuition session and free coaching, the Education Endowment Fund have partnered with a number of other organizations and agencies to help develop a best-case approach to the provisioning of the National Tutoring Programme. This includes a number of novel online tuition platforms which are currently going through or have recently finished their pilots. In terms of such approaches, an obvious issue is how students from disadvantaged backgrounds with limited access to the internet or technology while at home can still access such solutions. Evidently, the Covid-19 has created an "unprecedented challenge" for "educational inequality and social mobility" (The Sutton Trust, 2020a, p. 11) which will require a careful and considered approach to potential solutions - a number of which will be discussed in the recommendations section of this paper, such as an online, comprehensive 11-plus preparatory resource available to all students.

The National Tutoring Programme and its substantial funding could suggest a new, broader acceptance from the Government of the benefits of private tuition on exam outcomes. This area has historically been the subject of much contention and contradictory data. For example, in 2005 Bloom declared "private tuition fails results test" (Bloom, 2005, p. 3) with Gardner in the same year declaring “private tuition is unlikely to boost pupils’ exam grades” (Gardner, 2005, p. 8). Though in my experience, and the experience of the tutors I employed, we always saw considerable boosts in exam grades – which adopting my previous definition of academic ‘success’ reflects in greater attainment. Supporting this is another more expensive study, costing roughly £1,400 per pupil, which involved graduate coaching of year 7 students struggling with reading, spelling and grammar and resulted in over 5 months additional progress being made (EEF, 2019). If anything, this showcases how private tuition outcomes even across a number of small studies can vary considerably – which if anything stresses the importance of carefully evaluating such projects objectively, as the EEF do.

The type of tuition is also important, with traditional approaches (‘face to face’ and ‘one to one’) advocated by Bloom (1984), Cohen, Kulik, & Kulik (1982) and Ireson & Rushforth (2005) stating that private tuition does positively impact a student’s attainment, with their being a “widespread belief among educators and laymen that individualised instruction, especially in a one-to-one teaching situation, is almost infallibly effective” (Ellson, 1976, p.133). This paper contends that the continued ambiguity around the impacts of private tuition are unhelpful, as this paper finds upon review of the literature an almost overwhelming amount of evidence that suggests private tuition does improve attainment in virtually all circumstances (save for where private tuition replaces ‘business as normal’ teaching as opposed to supplementing it). This ambiguity arguably adds additional layers of complexity to the debate surrounding private tuition, a topic already convoluted and confused due the complex interlay of the various strands of ethics, regulations and autonomy, with the consequence that access may be limited to those in most need of private tuition.

As such, the intention of this paper is to traverse the private tuition sector and its impact on the attainment gap and shed light on whether the additional funding or other alternative approaches are able to narrow this gap or not. At the same time, by casting the focus of tuition both specifically in relation to the 11-plus, and then more generally in terms of the approaches, attitudes and perspectives on tuition in other countries, more of a globally informed understanding of private tuition, its typical *modus operandi* and its impacts can be considered. This drawing of insight can then be employed to inform the UK's future approach to tackling the problems highlighted in this paper – namely, how disparate and conflicting approaches to 11-plus coaching and tuition in primary state schools, combined with supposed shortfalls within the actual testing regimes (such as unfair weighting to the reasoning components mentioned above), may impact the attainment gap.

Thus, the recommendations contained within this paper will utilise both the author's insight and experience in this area, coupled with the findings of the literature review to strive for the realisation of solutions that are not only practically feasible and deliverable on a large-scale, but are supported by the underlying theory and literature as exuded in this paper. While the recent £350m funding announcement by the Government is commended and welcomed by the author of this paper. However, in light of the recent budget cuts across England, summating to £5.4 billion as estimated by the National Education Union (NEU, 2019) this remains a relatively small amount so only time will tell if this reallocation of funds is sufficient enough to minimise the attainment gap as well as other gaps spawning as a result of the budget cuts. Having now considered the background to this thesis, the various contexts at play, and a general overview of the intended outcomes of this study, this thesis will now turn to provide a personal and professional context to the autobiographical input in this paper with a short section on the Author's Stance and Reflections on the Research process.

Author's Stance and Reflections on the Research Process

Background and Interest

As a barrister by trade, and with my qualifications firmly in the legal sector (with the exception of my PGCE), the reader may rightly wonder why I have traversed into Education and the social sciences – or more importantly, what value I have to offer the discourse in this area. While teaching, private tuition was an important supplement to my income, especially when I was paid a graduate teacher salary of only £16,000 a year in South London! Now, as a private tutor of the 11-plus examinations for approaching a decade, I felt it was important to attempt to bring a bit more attention, and perhaps clarity, to the role of private tuition in the 11-pluspreparation for grammar school entrance. Over the past decade I have seen, and been an active part of, the private tuition and exam coaching of hundreds of students for the 11-plus grammar school tests common entrance examinations across England and have seen virtually all of these students go on to achieve places at their schools of choice. I came to the conclusion that but for the often-intense private tuition the students received, many would not have gone on to win places; a fortiori, capable but disadvantaged students were missing out on places because their parents or legal guardians could not afford tuition or did not appreciate the advantages of private tuition.

As an individual that was eligible for free school meals during school, who also attended a state primary and secondary school, and was the first person in my family to attend university – there is an obvious motivation for me to ease the burden and broaden the access for capable but disadvantaged students from backgrounds similar to my own. Drawing from my background in law and legal theory, I also recognised the high desirability of providing educational opportunities to disadvantaged individuals, which would serve to reduce inequality and class ceilings. Through my own work as a private tutor to royal families and very wealthy families in London and around the world, I would spend hours every week coaching and tutoring very privileged students that would go on to achieve places to some of the best selective schools in the country at 11-plus and 13-plus. At the same time, I would often be working with disadvantaged students of the same age (often on a pro bono basis) and even though the intellect and raw ability levels would frequently be similar by my reckoning (as in not measured in any summative or formal sense, but through how they approached new topics) the knowledge and attainment levels would be years apart. Seeing first-hand the opportunity chasm over many years, and the enormous positive impact the provision of private tuition had on my students, I was compelled to consider potential far-reaching solutions that would help to close this opportunity and attainment gap.

At the same time, I was becoming increasingly frustrated by many of the more competitive schools that would claim their entrance examinations were fair and provided an equal opportunity to all, regardless of background – while knowing from the many thousands of hours and the many years I had spent with direct exposure to the papers and the testing regimes that this simply did not reflect reality. One specific example I can think of is a non-selective state school student that had never come across squaring before (denoted by a superscript 2) simply because his school had not taught it – so consequently he could not even attempt that question in the mock examination I had set him which but for my involvement would have been the same outcome in his actual examination.

As I knew it would not be feasible for schools to lower their rigorously high entrance examination pass marks (which will regularly see grade or 'pass' inflation every year) (Kent Council, 2020) , I sought to privately fund and develop a digital solution that would replicate my tried and tested approach to 11-plus examination preparation within a digital delivery platform that utilised high-quality audio and video so that students could work through my private tuition programme in real time. While the selective v non-selective state school debate is far from over (least of all settled!) this thesis adopts a pragmatic viewpoint – on the assumption that if grammar schools do provide a better opportunity for students to access academic success (or simply provide more opportunities generally) then it is better to do something than hope this is not the case. Likewise, it is the author's opinion that the sheer complexity and multi-faceted nature (and politicisation!) of the debate has rendered a clear outcome one way or another unlikely, but that does not mean that a focus on grammar school testing should not be an important research focus.

In summary, I have seen how the more advantaged students (typically coming from wealthier backgrounds, though this is of course one of many factors which I am simplifying for efficacy) win more grammar school places compared to their less wealthy peers - and private tuition is an important, if not critical, enabler in this. Given the above, and having read how Kent County Council had banned schools from conducting in-school 11-plus exam coaching – though a BBC investigation in 2018 found that nine out of the ten fee paying schools visited were not observing this ban (Dunn, 2018) coupled with, in this author's opinion, the nonsensical claims that the 11-plus examinations were 'tutor proof' – I felt it was of paramount importance for this area to be the focus of fresh academic attention. It is from the author's experience, informed by the workings of other academics within the field that if social mobility is to be valued and promoted, then provision of private tuition and exam coaching for the 11-plus is the 'elephant in the room' this research seeks to address (Allen et al., 2017; Morrison, 2018).

Influence on The Research Process – Strengths and Limitations

As mentioned previously, there are a number of major limitations to this study as a direct result of my background and experience. As I have direct, lived experiences of all of the research areas of this thesis, I had to be extremely mindful that this research process was not simply a process of affirmation and confirmation where what I thought was the state of affairs coming into this research ‘turned out’ be the actual state of affairs. In research and psychology – this is known as ‘confirmation bias’, and broadly speaking is both a conscious and unconscious process where information is both selected and interpreted in a way that attaches more weight to information that is more supportive of your existing belief. In short, you look for information that proves you are right, and disfavour information that conflicts with your own views or beliefs. When this happens, it undermines the credibility of the research. However, on emotive and important topics such as this, it is hard to totally eradicate – if people really care about their beliefs or perceptions, they are strongly motivated to ‘prove’ their case.

I recognise that most topics have multiple approaches, and of these approaches, varying levels of importance are attached based on our own, individual values. What isn’t more of a passing consideration for one person could be the raison d’etre for another. Therefore, I sought to approach my research in the same way – I had a good idea of what the state of affairs was in terms of private tuition in the UK, but I would ‘put this to proof’. In the form of this thesis, due to the sheer breadth of topics covered, I proposed what I felt were the most likely answers to the research questions poised based on my own experiences and intuition, and then set out to put these to the test within my research framework detailed below. This way, I was able to infuse my own experiences and knowledge into topics independently of the research framework.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

The fact that the research design element of this paper was by far the most intellectually demanding and arduous highlights the current state of evidence-based educational research, or perhaps just reflects the difficulty the author faced in transitioning from the humanities to the social sciences! Nonetheless, the literature around methodologies in educational research would suggest this is a struggle encountered by many (Biesta, 2007) with the underlying conflict perhaps best depicted by way of metaphor – that of the multi-headed Lernean Hydra from Greek mythology. This part of the thesis will now explore the challenges to educational research and their research designs.

One head of the Lernean Hydra (the 'empirical' or evidence-based head) considers educational research in the same way as the sciences, or rather endeavours for such a state of affairs, such that evidence-based educational research will pave the way for 'high-quality systematic reviews and appraisals' (Davies, 1999, p.108) and thus provide the relevant authorities the solid foundation of research from which they can build educational policy. Previous educational research was lamented, in the UK at least, for lacking the 'answers to the questions' the government asked in order to develop educational policy – or if meaningful research in education was even possible (Biesta, 2007, p.1) with previous research accused of being 'fragmented, noncumulative and methodologically flawed; often tendentious and politically motivated' (Pring, 2000, p.1). At the same time, the educational agenda itself is said to be based upon:

> *political ideology, conventional wisdom, folklore and wishful thinking as it strives to meet the needs and interests of the economy, business, employers, law and order, civil society, parental choice, and at least rhetorically, the children, young people, and adults who make up the learning community* (Davies, 1999, p.1).

Irony aside, it would appear that the expectation of the policy makers is for the educational research community to ask not what (or should) the policy makers do for the education sector, but what the educational research community can do for the policy maker. To this extent, this head of the educational research Hydra demands an almost lab-like curation of scientific practice-based and practice-relevant evidence by which it hopes to crystallize educational policy from a spring of clarity and absolutes. However, (Pring, 2000) argues there is no such thing as context-free evidence

Indeed, it is at this stage of our mythologically inspired journey where we are adjoined by another sneering head of our educational research hydra (the phenomenological or 'grass roots' head). This head questions the overly 'positivistic assumptions' that underlie evidence-based education research and consider that such approaches are too narrow and confined (Elliott, 2001) with the scientific approaches over-presuming a homology or symbiology between education and the sciences (Berliner, 2002) or that they are led by an undesirable managerial agenda inappropriately driven from the top-down (Brighton, 2000) such that evidence based research heralds an 'end to critique and dissent' (Davies, 2003). This might be explained that using a strictly quantitative and post-positivist approach to education research leaves little movement for the interpretivism or constructivism commonly seen with more qualitative data, such that in the contextual analysis a researcher is provided more academic latitude to analyse, discuss and ultimately recommend (or 'critique and dissent').

Indeed, this phenomenological head seeks to cast 'an imaginative net far and wide, across space and time, to catch a glimpse of educational processes encountered from our human ancestral past up to the present' (Bainbridge and Del Negro, 2019) in the hope of understanding the human psyche, and in turn the learner's psyche, as part of education's wider role in providing an existentially meaningful existence, while asking questions around semantic and syntactic assumptions relating to education. Such approaches to education research cast an understandably wide and often esoteric net, and necessitate a critical, careful consideration of the contexts at play, which combined with the countless lenses by which the research could be viewed or interpreted, such that what the net pulls up (or doesn't pull up!) become almost infinitely complex. This is perhaps why many advocates of the evidence-based approach to education research claim such approaches are 'irrelevant to practice…[and] clutters up academic journals that virtually nobody reads' (Hargreaves, 1996, p7).

However, what determines the relevancy of research is dependent on the extent to which it provides an answer (if such exists) to the question poised, or better identifies the questions that should be asked. Unfortunately, this still often requires consideration of the context of the question, and even the appropriateness of the questions asked (or the answers sought).

Therefore, facing just these two heads of the many-headed Hydra, an educational researcher already finds themselves conflicted. Contemporary research theory would have the a researcher believe that to strike at one would leave him automatically exposed to the other, and would thus render his action a simple binary choice – akin to the 'paradigm problem' present in the use of Mixed Method data (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). For example, to adopt a systematic literature review for the purposes of my research question would necessitate the detailing of a methodology involving the setting of criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of studies, a search strategy for identifying papers then a means by which analysis, data extraction and synthesis could occur (Andrews and Harlen, 2004). Arguably, this approach provides an over focus on 'quantitative data' and experimental design and trusts that the statistical data will be used to answer the right question in the right way (or perhaps does not concern itself with such considerations) – such that the data becomes the end to the means. Conversely, others suggest that the term 'systematic review' is a misnomer, stating that all research is a form of systematic enquiry, with the only difference being the 'explicitness' of the approach (Andrews, 2005, p.400).

Intellectually troublesome as this debate may be, it underlies a more important point about evidence. The presumption (if not the requirement) for a systematic review is that evidence must be procured objectively to enable a value judgement to be made on the weight of evidence taking into account the trustworthiness, appropriateness and relevance of the 'evidence' (Harlen et al., 2002). However, the value judgement itself is not objective, and can remain subject to bias (Andrews, 2005, p401) with the veracity and practicality of the research to arise from the evidence (or value judgements made) also a variable – which impacts what read and what we feel makes sense to us. Moreover, as Toulmin (1958, 2003) points out by way of example - the nature of evidence is determined by the warrant (what connects the proposition to the evidence) and the backing (the ideology or values that provide credence to the warrant) which are all gauged against phenomenon, perspectives, insight and concepts (Gough, 2004). Therefore, as I consider it important that my own experience and insight informs this research, a systematic review and its association with quantitative data and objectivity present an obvious conflict. As such, I decided instead to vacate the obvious benefits of this approach, especially in the obvious structure it provides, instead opting to explore other avenues.

The above considerations are not helped by the fact that research models in themselves can often be ambitious in their designed function to depict an ideal (Andrews, 2005, p403). To therefore apply the above to this thesis, it is concerned with the provision of private tuition in the UK and asks whether the provision of private tuition is more likely to render an attempt at the 11-plus entrance examinations more successful. Perhaps more specifically, this paper seeks to consider the academic literature in this area, both domestically and globally (so that a broader consideration of the topic and trends might be informed) which will be complimented with the author's own experiences and perceptions and values. If the receipt of private tuition is a strong factor in 11-plus entrance examination success, a broader consideration of the literature will allow a more informed discussion to occur.

Adopting the assumption that there are a litany of studies that provide strong evidence that those in receipt of private tuition do perform better at the 11-plus, the research question will have done full circle with the research answer and a conclusion is reached: private tuition improves exam success at the 11-plus. However, aside from the above being a some-what obvious conclusion which is unlikely to receive much of an academic or policy reception, it raises the immediate question of 'why'. This therefore necessitates a refocusing and expansion of the original question to one that now seeks more detail – are there socio-economic factors at play, and if so are they acting in sole exclusivity or are there additional emotional and relational factors attributable to the question or in a further extension, are there important cultural dimensions or geographic correlations to 11-plus outcomes, or more broadly, the access and use of private tuition. In my opinion, to solely attempt an objective, systematic review of the above would be a disservice to the broad and dynamic intricacies of this research area and sterilise not only the importance but the depth and outreach of this topic as well as leading the author and his experiences out of the research. It is these considerations which help to develop and inform the research design.

Likewise, to err away from the risks of researcher bias in the pursuit of absolute objectivity in a topic area such as this wastes the opportunity of the reader to benefit from the thoughts and considerations of your author who has amassed over a decade of direct experience in this area. In conclusion, this paper seeks to adopt a middle ground to the research approach which will adopt a mixed method approach to the research which will draw from both an interpretivist and traditional post-positivist paradigm which allows both the autobiographical and qualitative side to this alongside the harder data. Thankfully, within the academic discourse on research methodology a solution to this obvious conflict or 'paradigm problem' (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) is provided – which sidesteps the contentiousness of conflicting paradigms that assert sanctity of their views, simply by ignoring it (the 'a-paradigmatic' stance) or allowing both paradigms to exist concurrently (the 'multiple paradigm' stance.) Therefore, this paper will adopt a dialectical multiple-paradigm thesis model to resolve the conflict as it allows the mixing of paradigms to gain insights (Greene, 2007, p12).

Structuring such a paper that draws insight from literature as well as the author required careful consideration as to prevent potential researcher bias from invalidating the conclusions and suggestions drawn from the literature. In order to achieve this, the paper is structured in such a way that the literature does not interfere with the personal experiences of the author until the discussion and recommendations part of the paper in which the conclusions drawn from the literature review will be bolstered with the experience of the author. However, this did not exist as the sole problem, rather there were a multitude that had to be tackled in order to develop a comprehensive yet relevant thesis. Complexity stemming from the interwoven nature of education with social class and culture acted as one of the greatest faced, mandating a deeper elaboration of the cultural divide and norms in order to provide ample foundation for the appropriate reference and insight to be drawn from each country. Such complexity was tackled by the format of the literature review ('East to West') as the paper first reviews the global perspectives and attitudes towards private tuition with reference to the reasoning as to what gives rise to the approaches towards and reception of private tuition and its engagement. While China was utilised as a historical reference point, the lack of available research led to its omission as a country-focus, which was also the case for the Middle East region. Given word limitations, countries were selected on the basis of relevance to the wider thread of discussion and focus, and availability of accessible research discourse. The author is glad to see an increase in research into private tuition more recently following the release of data from the China Education Panel Survey, and the increased attention following the declaration by the General Office of the State Council that the Chinese Government intended to regulate tutoring as a priority (Zhang, 2019)

Once this had been completed it was necessary to delve deeper into one of the main fields private tuition is utilised in – the 11-plus examination (Sutton Trust, 2019). Within the UK county variation was found to be important to explore given that different counties devise differing formats and approaches to the 11-plus in an attempt to minimise the impact that a child's socio-economic background can have on their ability to perform well in the exam. The very fact such differences exist would suggest that there is no 'golden' approach to testing, suggesting strengths and deficiencies in each of the tests. These different approaches will be explored and considered in detail. Such considerations involve looking at the proportion of students receiving places and their socio-economic backgrounds and what that meant for their academic outcomes. Again, the assumption being that more priviledged students have better and more readily available access to quality private tuition.

Naturally, this led the literature review to explore the impact of private tuition on the 11-plus, unsurprisingly a positive correlation was depicted by the literature regarding the utilisation of private tuition for 11-plus exams and the score that child would get. As the paper conducted this review to a greater detail, a growing concern emerged regarding what attaining a grammar place means for a student's education, the impact of such had been explored by Andrews et al., (2016) who found that students who attend a grammar school will on average perform significantly better at GCSE level than a similar student attending a non-selective school. However, in my experience the exception to this general rule of thumb are those students that fall into the category of 'gifted and talented' who would appear to reach high levels of academic attainment come what may.

While there is of course strong conflict present in the scholarship around the true impact of grammar school v non-selective state schools, it is in my experience and my professional opinion that grammar schools present not only a superior quality of education and attainment outcome for students especially in regions where it is possible for higher-quality teachers to move from non-selective schools to grammar schools (Abbi Hobbs and Kitchen, 2021), but also critically, (in perception at least) it instils students with higher levels of self-confidence and ambition compared to their non-grammar equivalents. This would appear to be supported by the most recent research arising from the UK Corona-virus exam results debacle, which seems affirmative in the attainment outcomes for secondary selective v secondary comprehensive as detailed in Table 1:

Centre type	Total centres	2018	2019	2020	Change 2018 to 2019	Change 2019 to 2020
Secondary comprehensive	510	21.3	19.8	21.8	-1.5	2.0
Secondary selective	72	37.5	36.0	37.2	-1.5	1.2
Independent	530	45.8	43.9	48.6	-1.9	4.7
Sixth form/FE/tertiary	219	21.6	20.5	20.8	-1.1	0.3
Academy	1,162	24.9	23.6	25.3	-1.3	1.7
Other	150	23.6	24.4	28.0	0.8	3.6

Table 1- Outcomes by Centre Type at Grade A and above (OFQUAL, 2020, p.136)

Throughout this particular section of the literature review, the disproportionate impacts on the disadvantaged student became apparent leading the literature review to explore this party in greater detail to establish whether this was only the case in the UK or globally and to what extent this was the case. Following a deep exploration of all of these areas, an amalgamation of the harmonious conclusions from the literature review was undertaken to form the basis of the discussion, these were then discussed in light of the opposing literature as well as the author's personal experience.

A consideration of whether to use the format of action research was undertaken but in an attempt to minimise the impact of researcher bias, as the author already intended to reinforce the literature as well as bolster the discussion with personal insight, it was decided the adoption of such an approach would veer away from a Psycho-Systematic extended literature review and also "lose touch with the voices of the people in the streets and workplaces (McNiff and

Whitehead, 1911) or rather in this instance the students. As such, this paper wished to be literature-centric with the experience of the researcher utilised within the discussions to bolster and critique how the findings interact with the main discussion themes – to utilise the action research process would, in the opinion of the author, have made the topic too practice focused, which is not appropriate for such a broad and amalgamated topic as this. As such, the research design became one of an autobiographical extended literature review.

In terms of selecting the literature, a number of databases were engaged, including Google Scholar, the Canterbury Christ Church Library search, SAGE Journals, Wiley Online library and Academia.edu. Given the specific focus areas of the initial literature review, that were geographic, the literature parameters were either set to the specific jurisdiction in question, with the language English, with no time frame provided for literature (given that this section of the literature was longitudinal, the wider time frame was needed). Approximately 20-30 papers were selected from the database, with 'peer reviewed' papers selected where the research database permitted this as a filter. Several search inclusion parameters were selected based on the various focuses of the paper – for example, researching private tuition in Japan meant limiting the results to those that included key words (inclusion criteria) such as 'Japan', 'private tuition', 'selective' and 'education' - however an absolute use of strict word parameters was decided against due to the international nature of the research in which other key terms could have been used interchangeably (which was especially the case with literature from Japan, that frequently used its own specific terminology for the different types of tuition).

In that case, the key terms found in the initial search would become the new inclusion criteria such as 'ronin' and 'yokibo'. An initial scoping exercise was then undertaken by the author, in which the literature was considered for suitability, with a personal determination made on which would be used. In keeping with the autobiographical, dialectic approach taken in this paper from the offset, the determination was based on a 'gut instinct' as to the utility of each literature, in whether it was in keeping with wider structural demands of the paper and also sought to achieve a mixture in the literature of quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method, coupled with the various and varied research axioms and viewpoints present.

While this approach will of course be open to critique on the basis of selection-bias, arguably with deductive approaches a researcher is liable to 'make the data fit' their preconceived ideas or theoretical framework under a faux neutrality anyway – so I would rather be honest and upfront in accepting that while an autobiographical model may be individualistic and untrustworthy, it may also be exceptionally 'value-laden' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011,p.8) and 'ideologically driven' (Janesick, 2000, p.385) and will leave the determination of where the balance of utility between the two is to fall with the reader. To borrow the words of a fellow Canterbury student who also sought to make use of the autobiographical approach – "I behaved like a hunter who already knows what prey he wants to catch the most" (Pathak, 2017, p.127).

To this end, while the literature contained within this thesis may lack the cold, calculated and almost lab-like curation of scientific practice-based and practice-relevant evidence with its substantial body of methodological and ontological proofing – it hopes to freely offer the insight and honest appraisal of the author, and challenges the reader to critically appraise it with a 'free' mind.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

After a short overview of how private tuition is defined in the literature and a general introduction, this section will explore the literature within four main thematic focal areas that are to be outlined shortly. Bray (1999) has demonstrated that private tuition is the practice of delivering tuition within the bounds of an academic subject usually provided in the form of extra classes lead by a tutor for their financial gain. Similarly, Tansel and Bircan (2005) found that private tuition can exist as additional educational classes that exist outside of the mainstream schooling curriculum (such as music and languages) to which they also connect its object to financial gain. Lee, Park and Lee (2009) and Bray (2010) indicate that private tuition is a part of what is called ‘shadow education’, a branch stemming outwards from the educational sector which provides an alternative pathway up the educational ladder.

As indicated by Bray (2010), this form of tuition is described as a shadow as it only exists because of the existence of the mainstream education system, consequently the size and development of this sector is adaptive to the developments made in the mainstream system. In addition, Buchmann, Condron, and Roscigno (2010, p484) defined shadow education as:

> "educational activities, such as tutoring and extra classes, occurring outside of the formal channels of an educational system that are designed to improve a student's chance of successfully moving through all the allocation process".

Which will act as the working definition of ‘shadow education’ throughout this paper.

Furthermore, research carried out over the previous decades has shown that private tuition in academic subjects has become increasingly common throughout the world (Dang and Halsey, 2013). Private tuition experiences its greatest concentration of utilisation within Asian countries due to the historical or cultural dependencies on additional schooling, several studies have illustrated that private tuition maintains a different societal role in Asian countries (Baker et al., 2001). Especially in southern Asia countries such as Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and eastern Asia countries like Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and China (Das and Das, 2013). The expansion of this service is also apparent in Europe, for example in western Europe countries like Italy, Portugal and France, and in southern Europe like Cyprus and Greece (Bento and Ribeiro, 2013). Alotaibi (2014) reported that private tuition is also becoming an expanding sector in Saudi Arabia. According to an investigation by the Saudi Gazette (2013) private tuition, mainly English language tuition, has become common, because of the adjustment in educational curricula, and due to the need of the secondary school student to pass the evaluation exam before they enter college. Such a persistent increase in English language tuition may also be attributable to the Saudi push towards achieving the goals outlined in Vision 2030 such as vastly increasing Western foreign direct investment (Vision 2030, 2016).

According to Hof (2014), despite the widespread use of private tuition, to date, there is minimal quantitative research on the effect of private tuition on students' academic performance. However, Smyth (2008) points to previous research that reveals that involvement in private tuition promotes academic performance. Private tuition can act to open additional pathways for students that previously would not have access to, for example it is common in both England and Northern Ireland for private tuition to be used as a preparatory technique for the 11-plus to build exposure to reasoning questions – a type of question the typical student will not have had exposure to (Bunting & Mooney, 2001). Thus, by increasing the likelihood a student who has engaged with this form of tuition will score higher than a similar student who did not enjoy this privilege, access to opportunity can be reduced (Cohen et al., 1981).

In order to explore the extent to which private tuition plays a role within the educational system this literature review will follow the proceeding structure: first the perspectives and attitudes towards private tuition around the globe will be explored with significant reference to the

Eastern and South Asian countries as this will depict a different context in which the practice is viewed under compared to the Western countries that will be explored. This is especially useful to demonstrate the interlink between tuition and culture which is vital to hold an understanding of before tackling the problem of educational inequalities stemming from its use.

Secondly, the literature review will focus specifically on disadvantaged students and how the availability (or rather the lack of availability) of private tuition impacts them disproportionately to other students. As such a theme persists throughout the literature, irrespective of both location and culture, it appears as the 'spotlight' issue. Regardless of the country, private tuition seems to expropriate those of a lower socio-economic background and further extenuates social inequities across the globe (Goodman & Gregg, 2010). As will be explored in greater detail during the discussion section of this paper, by contributing to this inequality, the 11-plus can also be said to have other undesirable impacts on a wider social scale.

Following this, the next part will course the UK paradigm towards private tuition in much greater detail, depicting the scenario in which its use is most controversial – the 11-plus. In addition to this, the format of the 11-plus will be explored with reference to how it is inherently designed to favour the advantaged, with any variation between counties explored within this section alongside their reasoning to do so (Kent 11-plus is the best example of such). Once the format and general approach towards the 11-plus examination in the UK has been outlined, this part will afford focus to the impacts of tuition on 11-plus outcomes. For clarity, 11-plus outcomes refer to both the direct impact on a student's attainment on the 11-plus exam as well as any subsequent exams that a student may sit in which their score is influenced in some way by their performance on the 11-plus. For example, a student who achieves a grammar school place will achieve significantly higher GCSE scores than a student of similar ability who does not attend grammar school (Andrews et al., 2016). However, Gorard & Siddiqui (2018) contend this fact opining that there are several other factors which ultimately result in a chronic imbalance of “chronically poor” intake contributing to the attainment gaps, however when considering each factor alongside one another, arrive at the conclusion that no one type of school is better than any other type of school.

3.1 Private Tuition / Shadow education - UK and Global perspectives

A significant number of studies have concentrated on Asian countries because of the high levels private tuition use - either due to either the historical dependencies on the sector or the cultural ties to their dependency on education, both in high stakes exams and general mainstream education. Indeed, this forms the basis as to why this literature review starts in the East and travels West – akin to the historical dispersion of knowledge and from a more contemporary angle – reflects the utility of private tuition. In fact, the modern use of private tuition in the UK and the US is said to be modelled on that of South Korea, with the South Korean private tuition market being roughly double that of the UK ($20bn – or 0.6% of GDP for English language tuition alone) – with Japan and South Korea often hailed by Western leaders, such as Barack Obama and Michael Gove, for their impressive OECD scores in maths, literacy and science.

3.1.1 Japan

In 1992, Stevenson and Baker indicated that "shadow education" reinforces the opportunities of entering Japanese universities by 16-25 per cent between High School Seniors. In a longitudinal study of high school seniors in Japan between 1980 and 1982, 7,240 students were selected from the 1980 seniors of which 4,280 were then interviewed again in 1982. The sample was proportionately split to reflect the mix of schools (private v public) and curriculum type (academic v vocational) in society. The results revealed that while only 8% of the total sample had a private tutor, which increased to 11% for those with college plans, when private tuition was expanded out to encompass practice test centres and private tuition courses (by correspondence) the figures increased to a dramatic 88% for those with college plans (which represented 74% of the base sample) (Stevenson and Baker, 1992, page 1645).

The paper concluded that "in short, shadow education is institutionalized as part of the Japanese educational allocation process" (Stevenson and Baker, 1992, page 1647). The paper also found that even when controlling for student and school characteristics, students from wealthier families and families which had higher levels of parental education, were more likely to pursue shadow education - with these factors increasing the probability of participating in shadow education by 12-15% (Stevenson and Baker, 1992). Scholastic characteristics, such as students with better grades or in a school perceived to be more 'academic' were also key indicators – with the former increasing probability of shadow education participation by 7% and the latter by between 22% - 68% (Stevenson and Baker, 1992, Page 1649).

Interestingly in Japan, the study also makes mention to the notion of students becoming 'ronin' (or 'drifters' or 'wanderers') for a year following high school graduation in order to prepare for university examinations – to which a 1/3 of graduates were willing to become ronin to prepare for examinations. While ronin, students will pursue a number of shadow education preparation activities, with yokibo, an intensive form of preparation tuition costing as much as $20,000 for courses such as medicine. Studies by Tsukada (1988) also point to the additional costs of room and board costs, alongside emotional stress and toil from the constant pressure to prepare optimally. Students from the most prestigious schools are also more likely to become ronin because they take the most competitive entrance exams needing the most preparation (Stevenson and Baker, 1992, Page 1652).

The net outcome of participating in shadow education in Japan is between a 16%-25% greater probability of a student attending a university after high school, when compared to a student that does not engage. Interestingly, the use of a private tutor decreases the chances of attending university, which the authors explain due to the remedial characteristics of tuition in Japan as opposed to the preparatory (meaning a student is more likely to use a tutor if they have already failed or need to remedy existing educational issues, as opposed to students wishing to prepare to win university places). The paper finds that "family background, academic ability, and school reputation all influence university entrance" (Stevenson and Baker, 1992, p. 1652) with those becoming ronin having a dramatic impact on the likelihood of attending university (80% more probable). The authors conclude that shadow education is pervasive in Japan as students jostle to become part of the education elite and invest in shadow education in the hope they see a "lifetime pay-off" (Stevenson and Baker, 1992, Page 1654).

This study is supported more recently, with Ono (2007) finding that around 60 per cent of students after high school graduation may spend additional time to attend private tuition programs to prepare them for university entrance examinations and increase their probability of entering university (Ono 2007). Overall, the use of private tuition in Japan is mainstream, with over 70% of all students having received tuition by the completion of middle school (Japan,1995; Russell, 1997). While the obvious limitation so these studies are in their relative small sample sizes and the age of the studies, they do indicate an consistent upward trajectory across a number of decades for the use of private tuition in Japan, which can be reflected in the enormous revenues of US $14bn in the mid 1990's (Russell, 1997, Page 153). Such is private tuition an institution in Japan there is even a Virtual Reality game 'Summer Lesson' that allows players to role-play a private tutor responsible for improving the grades of a virtual student! With consideration of Japan, where private tuition is a well-established and accepted part of their culture alongside its importance in high-stake testing established, this thesis will now turn to explore its neighbour South Korea, often considered the heart (or spur) of the private tuition industry - famous for its millionaire private tutors (over 75% of students are privately tutored with the top tutors commanding eyewatering fees) and their 'hagwons' or 'cram' schools.

3.1.2 South Korea

South Korea had long permitted schools to operate on a highly selective basis based primarily off of entrance examination performance. Historically, this allowed for private tuition tailored to a specific examination to be sought by students sitting the exam, meaning the wealthier students with access to private tuition generally performed the best and won the place. Soon this became another method to separate the rich and poor in South Korea and developed into a fierce battle between which tutor could best prepare students the most optimally, with some tutors being paid to tutor exclusively – such that it rose to such a level of significance that in this particular instance it was referred to as 'ipsi-jiok' and required government intervention (Kim & Lee, 2010).

Government intervention came in the form of an Equalisation Policy (1972), this policy introduced random assortment to schools - given that the students passed a nationalized examination, schools were no longer able to select which students they would take and which they would reject. Despite this reducing competition between schools, Kim and Lee (2010, p. 265) suggest that it possibly increased it between students – with students then seeking greater levels of private tuition and ultimately resulting in General Chun Doo-Hwan banning the vast majority of private tuition in 1980. This ban was not widely accepted in South Korea as private tuition continued to rise, though instead of it being a regulated sector it was now 'black-marketesque', coupling this with the difficulty of enforceability the ban was substantially repealed in 1999. During this 19 year stretch only 'hagwon' and privately administered tuition by university students was allowed, hagwon (or 'cram schools') required a permit and tutors were subject to close monitoring by the government (Kim and Lee, 2010, p. 265).

From the year 1980 to 2000, the number of students enrolled in hagwons increased over ten-fold from 118,000 to 1,388,000 in 2007 this number rose to 3.29 million (Herald, 2017). Wu (2004) found that 92.8% of students in middle school were engaged in private tuition and

87.8% of those in high school had private tuition. Using tuition as a tool to "improve academic performance" was provided as a reason by 85% of students which further reinforces the idea of ipsi-jiok. As a result of this increase in demand, Hahm (2019) has estimated the value of the private tuition industry in South Korea to be worth atleast \$20 billion, compared to just the £2 billion valuation of the private tuition industry within the UK (Jerrim, 2017, p. 2).

Unsurprisingly, the findings of Kim and Lee (2010) corroborate with those found across the world that the richer families spend greater amounts on private tuition. In addition to this, several other factors were established such as the location of a student - a student living in an urban area is more likely to access private tuition compared to a student living in a rural area (those living in the urban areas are generally more wealthy). Moreover, those already achieving highly academically are more likely to pursue private tuition as well as those from a better-educated family (Kim and Lee, 2010, p. 279).

South Korea does have its convergences with other parts of the world in that private tuition is sought to improve performance in a specific exam but it also differs in the fact that students holding these positions as well as those that do not, are likely to engage in persistent private tuition to better their general academic performance. Such a phenomena does carry its consequences in that it is common for sub-optimal teaching to occur in classrooms due to the vast academic gap between students which Kim and Lee suggest is as a result of the Equalization Policy preventing rich families from sending their children to private school and instead relying on private tuition (Kim and Lee, 2010, p. 288). The drastic approach adopted by the South Korean government has resulted in many holding the belief that the mainstream educational system is currently "inadequate to meet the requirements of a modernizing nation" (Seth, 2002). Overall, South Korea has private tuition ingrained into everyday life, with some 'super tutors' holding celebrity acclaim and earning millions a year. It is a unique comparator by the nature of the extremely high private-tuition rates and the general absence of private schooling provisions. This may be relevant within the UK setting with the adverse consequences highlighted in this section to be something to consider in the rare chance changes are made to the availability of private schooling in the UK. In the next section, private tuition in India will be explored, which is seeing private tuition transition from more of a remedial or complimentary service undertaken in large groups, to a more individual and exam focused service in the cities.

3.1.3 India

The findings of the fore coming literature are relevant to this paper as it showcases how it is not only the initial impact of tuition, which is of value, but the sustainability of it over a longer term too. In India, Banerjee et al. (2007) observed that private tuition is a widespread phenomenon across the country which elevated levels of use. They noted that private tuition programs improve test scores by enormous rates, that students who take private tuition improve their average test scores by a standard deviation gain of 0.14 in the first year and 0.28 in the second year (p.1262). Banjeree et al., point out how one of the most common forms of private tuition in India is through a 'Balshaki Program' which involves a young woman from the local community who has at least graduated with a secondary education who then tutors local students for two hours a day.

The researchers found the provision of Balshaki tuition to have a "substantial positive effect on children's academic achievement" (Banerjee et al., 2007, page 1237). The sample encompassed 98 of the 122 government primary schools, with half of the schools receiving a Balshaki to work with. The learning was measured using annual pre-tests, mid-tests and post-tests. Across the first year the variation on post test scores between the treatment and comparison group was 0.18 for mathematics and 0.13 for language. Across the second year, standard deviation gains of 0.40 for mathematics and 0.29 for language were observed (Banjeree et al., 2007, p1248). To give a comparable idea of the degree of improvement this reflects – they are similar to the improvements made in the Tennessee STAR experiment which saw class size reduced from 22 or 23 students down to fifteen students a class (Krueger and Whitmore, 2001).

The researchers also considered the Balshaki program to represent excellent value for money given that Balshakis tutored for 2 hours a day (out of the 4 hours students were in school) for just 10% of the cost of a teacher. However, it should be recognised that this sample largely concerned students that lacked basic reading skills and competencies in maths. This is perhaps why when the study was repeated with students in Mumbai (who were generally better educated than the students from Vadodara, a poor area) the improvements were less marked with 0.09 and 0.07 variation in year 1 and 2 (Banerjee et al., 2007, P.1251). While this is a major limitation to the study, it also stresses how the potential improvements private tuition can facilitate are especially felt by those that are most disadvantaged – which renders the provision of private tuition within an English context as especially appropriate for those in receipt of free school meals, for example.

This literature (Banerjee et al, 2007) recognised the limitations of the research and called for further studies to also consider the durability of such programs, as this study did not track the progress of students, as they had then gone on to high school. This is important as some studies by Glewwe, Ilias and Kremer (2003) found that incentives to teachers to improve test scores were effective in the short term but then tailored off within 2 years. Kremer, Miguel and Thornton (2009) looked at the long-term effects of scholarships on girls. They found that those in receipt of a scholarship had their test scores increase by 0.28 standard deviation and this persisted even one year after the effect of the program; however, when compared to boys, the initial impact decayed more rapidly.

More recent studies into private tuition in India by Mehtabul (2015) from more of an economic perspective finds demand for tuition in India to be demand inelastic (therefore a ‘necessity’ in economic terms) at every stage of schooling, which suggests that in India, private tuition is seen as a ‘necessary good in the household consumption basket’ (Mehtabul, 2015, p.1). Indeed, even in studies conducted across 160 rural primary schools in India, nearly a fifth of students were in receipt of private tuition (Aslam and Atherthon, 2012). Concerns were raised however that teachers were deliberately teaching less content and preserving energy for their private tutoring work (Bray and Lykins, 2011) which would appear to be supported by the Jayachandran study (2014) which found private tutors would cover less material during the school day in order to drive demand for their private tuition. Overall, private tuition in India can fairly be considered a phenomenon with 31% of students accessing it regularly, and with it accounting for 16.5% of a household’s total expenditure on average (Mehtabul, 2015, p.4).

Having identified the common presence of private tuition and its broad engagement in Japan and South Korea, and to a lesser but increasingly important extent in India, the focus of this literature will now consider Nepal before turning further West.

3.1.4 Nepal

Private tuition within Nepal has historically been perceived as an “indispensable supplementary input” that students can utilize in order to propel their academic potential in a notoriously competitive academic culture (Subedi, 2018). In Nepal, there does not exist a substantial disparity between the proportion of students attending community and institutional schools accessing private tuition, which we see elsewhere. Rather, private tuition is playing a mutualistic role with the mainstream schooling system in Nepal – as the mainstream educational practice changes, private tuition adapts to supplement these developments (Bray & Lykins, 2011).

In Nepali culture, the necessity for private tuition is perceived as a must in order to achieve your full potential. Fuelling this idea, is the sprouting of 'hostels' across Nepal which offer specialized tuition programs for specific tests. Commonly, these hostels are owned by the private schools and the other educational institutions in which they offer tuition specific to the test they administer – one must not leap too far to appreciate how this can be abused by those in a position of wealth or power. Recently, similar hostels have been established by the community schools with the aim of providing support to the students who do not have access to the hostels which essentially only open their doors to the upper echelon of Nepali society as a result of their cost (Subedi, 2018). In some cases, these community hostels have been made a mandatory provision for students wishing to take their secondary education examinations (SEEs) due to the accepted belief that it will drastically increase the proportion of students who pass the SEE – which of course raise serious access concerns for disadvantaged students who cannot afford such preparations. Utilizing private tuition in such a manner has been critiqued by some academics as "the prosperity of private tutoring distorts students' ability to learn by encouraging rote memorization" (Upadhaya, 2005).

Majumdar (2014) noted that similar to its bordering country, India, Nepal's private tuition sector is facilitating the segregation of students as the "coaching classes are themselves socio-economically stratified and segregated" (Majumdar, 2014). Such a statement corroborates with the suggestions of Loyalka and Zakharov (2014) who opine that private tuition is simply another illustration of social inequity as well as demonstrating that a social inequity link to educational outcomes does exist across the globe. Due to the fact that there are many different forms of private tuition in Nepal, ranging from one-to-one tuition to private residential hostels, it is significantly more difficult to collect accurate data regarding the realistic prevalence of private tuition in Nepal. A study conducted by Thapa (2011) found that at least 68% of students currently in grade 10 were receiving some form of private tuition – if this is altered to include ‘had received’ private tuition at some point, it is incredibly likely this number will be much higher. Indeed, academics point out the segregation and distinction between the “lowbrow tuition centres and highbrow, comparatively better-quality coaching institutions… thereby making it much harder to enhance social mixing and collegiality among students” (Majumdar, 2014, Page 16)

Legislation within Nepal has notoriously avoided the topic of private tuition as while the Education Act of Nepal, 1971 ((Lawcommission.gov.np, 2018) has guaranteed that education will be free for all students up to the end of secondary education it has failed to attempt to equalize the quality and access to the shadow education sector - thus the wealthier and more advantaged students have access to the better tuition facilities compared to their peers. This coupled with the lack of regulation on an individual level and the culturally rooted idea that private tuition is necessitated – can only result in those from a low socio-economic background being exploited by providers within the shadow education sector (Subedi, 2018).

Subedi’s findings depict the Nepali education system as being led by the shadow education sector, in the sense that both the “teacher and students were found to have focused on the exam rather than learning…destroying mainstream schooling by rote learning” (Subedi, 2018, Page 34). These findings are similar to those observed in Japan in that the shadow education sector heavily dictates future educational outcomes but experiences variance in how closely they interact, for example in Nepal as Subedi has illustrated the education system is being led by shadow education whereas in Japan shadow education acts as a catalyst to achievement of the general curriculum. Furthermore, his work suggests that the pedagogical practices vary between tutorials and the classroom, specifically the attitudinal display of the teachers and the activities which they can provide for the students. In addition to this, teachers in Nepal too have been have accused of “teaching less during the school day to increase demand for their tutoring” (Jayachandran, 2014, p190).

As the overview has illustrated, Nepal is significant in the shadow education world as it possibly maintains the most deeply woven cultural dependencies on the sector compared to anywhere else around the world, meaning any landslide changes would have monumental impacts or just blatant 'brick-wall' opposition. Notably, Subedi's study was heavily inhibited by the fact that those included within the study were engaged in some way within the private education sector, there were no participants that existed outside of this, which of course limits its comparability. In the next part of this literature review, Azerbaijan, a modern country firmly planted between East and West will be considered, where private tuition is used traditionally to supplement mainstream education, though also is seeing a surge in demand and a change in its focus.

3.1.5 Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan follows the same trend many other Easter European countries exhibit: a modest dependency on private education until the turn of the millennium in which demand rose significantly, this spike is illustrated by the increased proportion of students in Azerbaijan accessing some form of supplementary private tuition. Silova and Bray found that over 90% of the students included in their study had, at some point, accessed either private tutorial lessons, preparatory courses, or both during their academic life (2006, p.73). Significantly, these findings depict that private tutorials are the overwhelming preference with it accounting for approximately 80% of those who had accessed some form of supplementary tuition.

Interestingly, those who accessed private tuition in Azerbaijan were much more likely to persist with its use throughout the academic year, with 87% of students included in the study indicating that they engage with private tuition on a regular basis (Silova & Bray, 2006, p.74). Consequently, a much more rounded and less 'exam-centered' approach can be taken within these tutorials thus drawing the benefits from both the more holistic mainstream school approach and the more exam focused approach of the private education industry. Azerbaijan's rounded approach to private education is further reinforced by the proportion of students accessing tuition for a multitude of subjects, amazingly 79% of students engaged with private education for three or more different subjects – this is over three times larger than any other Eastern European country included in the study. Unsurprisingly, the most accessed subject areas in tuition were "mathematics", "foreign language" and "mother tongue" with each being within 2% of one another (87.6% for mathematics compared to 89.5% for mother tongue) (Silova & Bray, 2006, p76).

High levels of persistent and holistic private tuition, as exhibited in Azerbaijan, would suggest that the role private tuition maintains in Azerbaijan differs to the role it plays within different countries and cultures. Rather it can be perceived as a tool to achieve long-term educational outcomes or to act as a bridge to compensate for any shortfalls of the mainstream schooling system. This particular conclusion is supported by the notoriously poor education system within Azerbaijan, especially the higher educational system (Isakhanli & Pashayeva, 2018) in which a structure either did not exist or it was so rapidly changing that no continuity existed Thus, the view that private tuition was "the only way to get a high-quality education" was adopted by the people of Azerbaijan (Silova, 2009). It is important to note that in Azerbaijan it is more common for private tuition to occur in groups, it would seem this is an adaptation of the Azerbaijanis to access a better level of education, likely due to the amalgamation of extremely low per capita income meaning individual tuition was unaffordable, coupled with the simple inadequacy of the mainstream schooling system.

The size of these groups varies dependent upon the socio-economic position of the student/student's family. For example, a family who can be characterized as coming from a high socio-economic background, is likely provide their child with one-on-one tuition. On the other hand, a family residing on the opposite side of the spectrum may not be able to afford one-on-on private tuition and opt instead for grouped tuition as it is much cheaper. This is illustrated by Silova and Bray's finding that 47% of students engaged in private tuition alongside peers in groups of four or more (2006, p.77). Despite this, students from Azerbaijan are found to maintain the second highest income proportions spent on private tuition (nearly 5%) in Eastern Europe. This investment would seem worthwhile considering that nearly 90% of Azerbaijanis who engaged in private tuition scored the highest within their school, however this is not as surprising as it first seems considering the reasons for which these students wish to engage in private tuition – 40.6% of students utilize private tuition to address a gap in their knowledge base, 31.4% use it to systematize previously learned topics and 26.3% use it reinforce mainstream school learning (Silova & Bray, 2006, p.85). All of which will positively impact a student's ability to perform well in mainstream school examinations.

This overview of Azerbaijan has provided the conclusion that the private education sector in Azerbaijan is utilized in a differing way to the majority of the world, which provides additional areas for consideration if a global shift is to be made regarding shadow education as any changes are capable of adversely affecting the students engaged in the Azerbaijani educational system, this is only intensified given Azerbaijan's historical battle with establishing appropriate and functional educational frameworks to develop educational provisioning in the country.

3.1.6 England and Northern Ireland

In the UK, private tuition has notoriously been referred to as the "hidden secret of British education" (Sutton Trust, 2016, p2). Despite the magnitude of the sector within the United Kingdom, due to the general lack of regulation regarding private tuition –it becomes difficult to accurately establish the size of the industry though it is estimated at around £2bn a year (Jerrim, 2017). Other estimates have placed the industry at a multi-billion pound (EdPlace, 2012). Given that the Sutton Trust estimates that approximately 870,000 students within England engage with private tuition each year, either the value of the industry has been grossly overstated, or the number of students in receipt of private tuition has been grossly understated

- as it suggests that each student is engaging with £7,000 worth of tuition a year – when taking the median price of tuition this equates to 275 hours (Sutton Trust, 2016, p17).

Furthermore, it is estimated that there are 1.5 million tutors practising in the UK which results in an imbalance of tutors to tutees by almost a two-to-one ratio with over 600,000 more tutors than tutees. Such a figure would, according to the ONS, suggest that one in every thirty UK adults between the ages of twenty and seventy is a tutor (Office for National Statistics, 2015). This number is incredibly high and relatively unrealistic, though such discrepancies in estimates are understandable given the lack of transparency and regulation in the field and the fact that access to private tuition is often a 'closely guarded secret' (Woolcock, 2019).

Similar to the rest of the globe, the UK has experienced an increased utilization of private tuition with the proportion of 11-16 year old students having engaged in private tuition at any point rising 7% (from 18% to 25%) and those currently in private tuition rising 3% (from 7% to 10%) from the years 2005-2016 (Jerrim, 2017). Reasoning for such an increase has been provided suggesting that the UK is currently in the midst of an educational "arms race" (Boyle, 2015) in which middle class families are actively pursuing private tuition as a method to ascertain competitive places in top schools and universities.

Tuition is utilized in the UK mostly as a resource to boost a student's score in a specific test or exam, close to 60% of tutees have provided this as the reasoning for them seeking private tuition (Sutton Trust, 2016, p.19). This proportion falls slightly upon the reasoning changing to "help me with my schoolwork in general" and significantly falls when the reasoning is altered to "interested in a particular subject". Tuition provided in the UK follows the global trends observed throughout the countries above in that Mathematics and English are the two most sought-after subjects, a longitudinal study conducted by the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (Department for Education, 2016) found that 54% of those receiving tuition was for Mathematics and 31% for English. For those who do not engage in private tuition, 37% stated the reasoning was due to the financial burden it would cost due to sessions being "too expensive" (Ireson and Rushforth, 2011, p.12). This would suggest again that socio-economic background would heavily dictate whether a student is able to engage in such an activity, further causing an indirect educational disparity as a result of a wealth gap and thus widening the opportunity and attainment gap.

Tutor Hunt is a tuition agency that regularly collects data regarding the number of students enrolled in some form of private tuition in private schools compared to state schools, with data collected concluding that the proportion of the former was twice that of the latter (7% compared to 14%), this greater proportion persists throughout a student's academic career (Independent Schools Council, 2015). Furthermore, across the educational system, students who are entitled to free school meals (FSM) are much less likely to participate in private tuition – most likely because the cost serves as a major obstruction to their access (Baker et al., 2014). In addition to this, students from families earning above the £50,000 threshold are more likely to pay for private tuition than those earning below this threshold (Rushforth, 2011). Ultimately, the role of private tuition and the accessibility of it is extremely similar between the UK and the US, where they differ is in the infrastructure of the market itself – private tuition in the UK is much more available via independent tutors rather than large corporations. From an academic and industry perspective, it also far more open to research and critique with several bodies collecting data regarding the impact of such practices on the academic outcomes of students, such as the Educational Endowment Fund, the Sutton Trust and the ONS.

3.1.7 United States of America

Shadow education is afforded far less media attention in the United States, resulting in less academic attention and common misconceptions regarding its prevalence – perhaps due to the existing extremely high college tuition costs relative to other countries, or the fact less than 1%

of the entire school-age population attend private schools. Of course, within the United States, the scholastic assessment test (SAT) is the most influential examination that the vast majority of students will sit during their entire academic career with over 2 million students sitting the test annually (College Board, 2009). As these examinations have become increasingly more competitive and important, students have sought additional competitive advantages – private tuition being one of them. Shadow education soon boomed in the US with the Princeton Review reporting a $110.4 million revenue in 2009 alone for its test preparation service, so by no means is this a small market in the United States (Princeton Review, 2010).

Despite concerns raised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization regarding the exponential growth of the industry and the potential consequences, the industry has only grown larger and more institutionalized in the US. Such a phenomena has been suggested to "magnify inequality and confound a nation's ability to provide equitable and high-quality education to the general population" (Baker and LeTendre, 2005). This is illustrated by the costs required to access these resources, one-on-one private tuition administered by the Princeton Review can cost anywhere in the range of $1500 to $6900 per course (Princeton Review, 2010b) with an increase in score "guaranteed". If a student's score does not increase they are entitled to their money back which they could use to purchase more tuition to better prepare them for a re-sit (Buchmann et al., 2010).

As a result of these practices being such a financial burden, many families from a low socio-economic background are isolated from private tuition. Furthermore, this intensifies the underlying racial divide regarding income in the US. For example, in the US, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics found that African, American and Hispanic households maintain a median pre-tax income considerably less than $50,000, whereas a White or Asian household will have a pre-tax income greater than $50,000 (bls.gov, 2018). Placing such a large price on access to these resources is bound to further extenuate the disparity between not only those from a higher or lower socio-economic background but also between those of differing racial backgrounds. With this type of private tuition 'guaranteeing' an increase in a student's SAT score then it is more likely that generally those who have had access to this tuition will be better prepared and perform better than those who have not.

Research also found that students coming from families with household income greater than $50,000 were by far the most likely demographic to utilize private courses or private tutors whereas those from families with an income lower than $50,000 were much less likely to engage in a private course or private tuition, rather they would utilize books or videos to assist their preparation (Buchmann et al., 2010). Interestingly, out of the denominations of families earning less than $50,000, the lowest denomination ($0 - $14,999) were the demographic that utilized private courses and private tutors the most. Overall, Buchmann concludes that "students from the most advantaged families are significantly more likely to enrol in private courses", with such courses estimated to boost a student's SAT score by 30-40 points (Buchmann et al., 2010, p.455). To illustrate how impactful this is, the paper draws on the findings of a National Association of College Admission Counselling survey in 2009 which found that just "a 20-point improvement on the SAT-Math test would significantly improve students' "likelihood of admission" (Briggs, 2009, p.18).

To this end, in the US, shadow education is perceived as providing both a competitive advantage in scoring highest in a high school course and as a tool to propel wealthy students into selective colleges and universities. However, due to the current paradigms of shadow education in the US, not enough attention is afforded to the sector in terms of how it facilitates the expropriation of students from low socio-economic backgrounds from selective colleges. If the pattern of research continues to fail to address this area, it is likely that this sector will become increasingly targeted towards the wealthier families (Bray and Kwok, 2003).

Summary of International Comparisons

To this end, this section demonstrates that several important commonalities and differences exist between Western and Eastern cultures regarding both the role of private tuition and the attitudes towards it. However, the general perception of private tuition in the UK is much closer to that in America compared to other countries (such as India, Nepal and Azerbaijan) in that it is not predominantly used to address the shortfalls of the educational system but rather as a tool that the wealthier can utilize to create competitive advantages for their children in attempting to gain access to competitive places and to perform well in tests – albeit this is not yet at the scale of private tuition in Japan and South Korea (not to mention other Asian countries such as China). Furthermore, in the West the increase in private tuition could be in part caused by the vast number of private tutors who decide to offer a service for a financial gain (Bray, 2006). Arguably, in many countries such as Japan and South Korea, combined with many countries in Eastern Europe, South East Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa that were not the focus of this study, private tuition rates often exceed 50% and sometimes approach full enrolment (Paviot et al., 2008) which showcases the increasingly globality and rise of tuition and the shadow education system.

While each of the countries embody a different culture, each of which could be accredited to differing impacts several factors have on both the attitudes towards private tuition as well as what it is used for and how effective it is, this paper considers that the global trends apparent in the literature – namely the increased use of private tuition and private tuition more focused on examinations or entrance tests go beyond the cultural changes. Indeed, in order to establish the extent to which culture defines accessibility to private tuition, the relationship between culture and private tuition must first be discussed. However, defining culture drawing from academic sources may introduce more confusion than clarity in that the "concept of culture is deeply contested" (Johnson, 2013) and the definition of such could entertain a thesis of its own, such that a consideration of how culture and private tuition are interlinked will not be undertaken – aside from the point that Kapur (2018, p.1) makes that education and culture are 'mutually interdependent…Thus, the relationship between education and culture are indissoluble'. Thus, while culture will almost certainly be an important consideration in the utilisation of private tuition, it will be outside the confines of this thesis.

In the next part of the literature review, the impact of private tuition (or lack thereof) on disadvantaged students will be explored, which is becoming an increasingly pressing focus point on account of the global private tuition trends detailed above – which threaten to further concentrate the negative impacts of private tuition on those unable to access its benefits.

3.2 Disadvantaged Students

Undoubtedly, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are likely to suffer consequences throughout the educational system within England and Wales due to either the family's financial restrictions or the stark inaccessibility of appropriate resources stemming from their geographic situation. However, some of these issues may not validate a 'disadvantaged' label to be provided to the student - rather a set of criteria must be met which specifically refer to the financial capabilities of the household to render a student legally 'disadvantaged'. The government require households to conform to at least one of the criteria they set out for children to be eligible for free school meals from year 3 onwards, regarding "income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, income-related employment and support allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guaranteed element of Pension Credit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit" (GOVUK, 2020). Children under the care of the local authorities can also be eligible for free school meals.

Across England, it is estimated there are 7 million students aged between 4 and 16 that are enrolled in publicly funded schools, the National Audit Office (2015) finds 29% of those qualify as coming from 'disadvantaged' backgrounds. Furthermore, the OECD (2014) has noted that the divide between the rich and disadvantaged within the UK is relatively large when compared to those around the globe, essentially adding sand to the pockets of the disadvantaged students trying to climb the social ladder. Such a gap does not merely exist but instead plays a pivotal role in the ability of the students to succeed academically. In 2014, data collated by the National Audit Office (2015, p.13) calculated this attainment gap at a nearly 30% divide – only 36.5% of disadvantaged students achieved at least five GCSEs within the grades of A* to C, with Mathematics and English being a necessary inclusion compared to 64% of the non-disadvantaged students achieving this standard. Further exemplifying the impact of a student's socio-economic background on their attainment is the inclusion of the factors of gender, ethnicity and SEN (special educational needs) which were all vestigial in altering this gap. Concerningly, the Sutton Trust (2010) have valued the economic impact of this gap between the range of £56 billion and £140 billion by the year 2050. However, the innate complexity of schooling and parenting introduces factors which cannot be resolved through the actions of just one party and possibly not even through the actions of both (National Audit Office, 2015, p.13).

The cyclic potential of this attainment gap has been explored by the NAO (2015, p. 15) and concludes that "disadvantaged pupils tend to have more educational disadvantages" which develops into "disadvantaged pupils tend[ing] to achieve less at school" rendering these pupils less likely to access higher education and greater salaries meaning "disadvantaged students tend to become disadvantaged adults" at which point the cycle is likely to perpetually repeat as the next generation are born. Different methodologies have been presented with the aim of breaking the cycle, many taking the form of some type of governmental funding for the disadvantaged such as the Pupil Premium Plan (2011).

Pupil Premium is a government provided monetary package for disadvantaged students that was introduced following Chancellor Osborne's declaration to the House of Commons in 2010 that:

> *"we will also introduce a new £2.5 billion pupil premium, which supports the education of disadvantaged children and will provide a real incentive for good schools to take pupils from poorer backgrounds. That pupil premium is at the heart of the coalition agreement, and at the heart of our commitment to reforms, fairness and economic growth"* (Jarret and Long, 2014, p.3).

In the 2011/12 academic year the premium sat at £488 for each disadvantaged student (1.3 million eligible students). It has only continued to grow with the premium increasing to £935 - £1,323 in the 2014/15 academic year and renovations in the Pupil Premium Policy allowed for the number of eligible students to rise to 2 million, raising the total set aside for funding from £614 million to £2.5 billion. However, the extent to which this funding is effective remains unestablished by the NAO as they instead predict "significantly" higher proportions of students reaching government expected standards for their achievement (p.16).

Interestingly, the Pupil Premium does not equally impact disadvantaged students across England, rather it benefits the areas in which there is a greater proportion of the student cohort who are classed as 'disadvantaged' (these are generally poorer, non-selective areas). This benefit is estimated at a 5.1% increase in per-pupil funding (p.21). Contrastingly, the per-pupil funding falls 3% for disadvantaged students in publicly funded schools which have a low level of disadvantaged students (these are generally more affluent and selective areas), areas in which have previously been identified as creating the largest attainment gap between students (Cook et al, 2016).

Despite the increased funding, Ofsted (2012) concluded that it had no significant effect on how schools decided to support their disadvantaged students, thus necessitating new approaches to be explored and implemented. Schools across the country started to proactively spend the Pupil Premium funding on disadvantaged students which could assist in the closing of the attainment gap, with the targeting of this support towards high, moderate and low disadvantaged achievers (68%, 83% and 98% respectively). However, this has been subject to critique from the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2014) who suggest attributing a lesser emphasis on the disadvantaged high achievers results in them achieving significantly less than similar high achieving pupils that are not disadvantaged. Furthermore, this Premium is mainly targeted at closing the attainment gap that stems from the 11-plus rather than prior to it, it is designed to facilitate booster sessions for disadvantaged pupils to accelerate their curriculum learning – not the content on the 11-plus exam (OFSTED, 2012) meaning that it is unlikely this will help resolve the problem effectively as it is not tackling the problem at its root.

Williams (2009) has argued that if these types of gaps are allowed to persist within the educational system, then the social and economic inequalities will be continually perpetuated. Rasbash et al., (2010) echoes this point and finds that scholastic activities only account for 20% of achievement variance between pupils whereas familial environmental factors account for 80% of this. This finding was reinforced by Ofsted (2014, p.32) who opine that "these factors are beyond the school gates and the communities where pupils live can have a detrimental impact on their achievement. Schools can do much to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils but only so much". Misinterpretations can be drawn from such conclusions suggesting that change is beyond the powers of the schools, it would be a "mistake to assume that schools cannot be part of a solution" (Clifton and Cook, 2012, p.5). The actions of a school can directly impact the achievement of disadvantaged students, provided these are within certain limits (Demie & Mclean, 2014; Demie & Lewis, 2010; Mongon & Chapman, 2010; Ofsted, 2009).

According to Mortimore and Whitty (1997):

"Probably the single most significant factor that currently distinguishes the low achieving schools in urban areas from that of the more academically successful schools is that only a small proportion of pupils in academically successful schools come from disadvantaged homes."

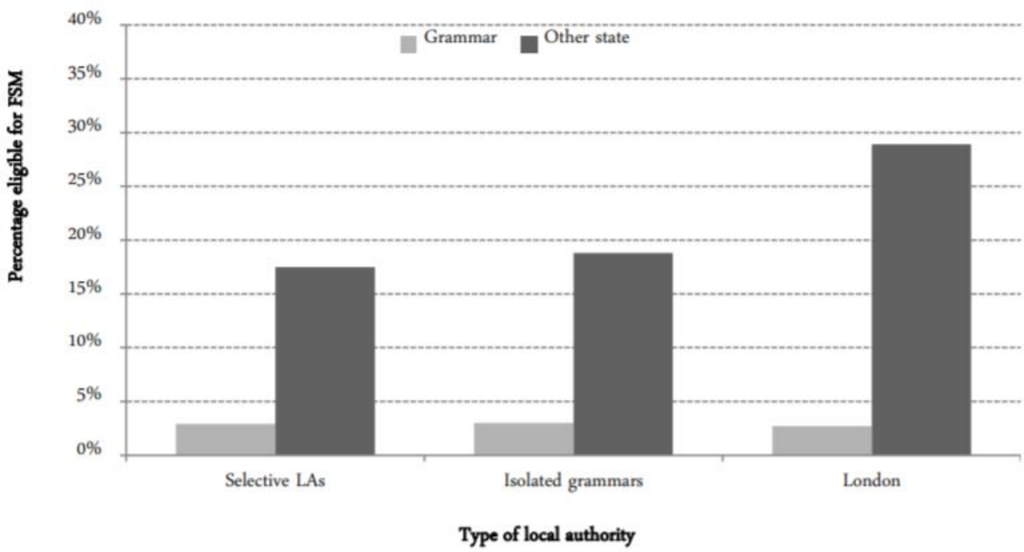
This was reinforced by the findings of Demie (2002) and Cassen & Kingdon (2007) who demonstrate that there exists the strongest link between poverty and achievement. This paper posits on the possibility that this stems from inability of the disadvantaged to maintain equal access to private tuition for 11-plus exams and other important exams as the quality of secondary education a student is exposed to strongly influences their future academic achievements (Dearden et al., 2004). Allen et al., (2016) amplifies this point by illustrating findings that only 12% of FSM eligible students who sit the 11-plus pass it, compared to 30% of those who are not eligible for free school meals.

Andrews et al., (2016, p.24) devised a useful figure in which illustrates the imbalance of FSM eligible students spread across the attainment scale of KS2 students (note the terms FSM eligible and disadvantaged are interchangeable in this regard).

Figure 2: Distribution of Key Stage 2 attainment in 2015 by eligibility for FSM

This phenom is then exacerbated by the lack of admittance of FSM eligible students into grammar schools meaning both the KS3 and KS4 attainment gap will persist. Kirby (2016) finds that 18% of students aged 11-16 within England had received some form of private tuition for a specific entrance exam in the past and it is incredibly more likely for the bulk of that proportion to be accredited to those from "high affluence families" as they are twice as likely to receive this form of tuition compared to those from a lesser affluent family. Consequently, this suggests that within the current state of private tuition and entrance exams, disadvantaged students are not likely to increase their uptake of these grammar places, which is perhaps why in 2020 the government announced £15m of government funding to grammar schools to boost the number of places made available to students on FSM (Department for Education, 2020). However, the percentages have largely remained unchanged since previous studies with this been especially pervasive in London:

Figure 3: Percentage of Year 7 pupils eligible for FSM at grammar and other state-funded schools 2009-2012 – (Cribb, Sibieta and Vignoles, 2013, p.7)



Ultimately the EPI (2017) opined that no examination exists that reduces the vast imbalance of disadvantaged students passing the test compared to non-FSM students. This would suggest disadvantaged students are subject to a diminished likelihood that they will excel educationally compared to their non-FSM counterparts and thus remain entrenched within a disadvantaged niche of the social system. In order to circumvent this particular problem, specific quotas have been introduced for grammar schools to adhere to in order to increase the proportion of disadvantaged students they admit annually. King Edward VI grammar in Birmingham is an example of this, in an attempt to reduce the impact of decreased access to private tuition for entrance exams they introduced an adjusted ‘qualifying’ score that pupils classified as ‘disadvantaged’ must achieve for their pass mark.

This is lower than the standard mark meaning that the significance of the ‘reasoning’ gap does not carry as much weight – facilitating a greater number of FSM students achieving the qualifying score for a grammar school (The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham, 2020). Social and academic impacts of this implementation have currently not been able to be accurately established due to the recent introduction of such quotas and thus lack of data that can be included however such impacts are not envisaged to tackle the attainment gap at its root rather an alleviation of the impact the roots have (Andrews, Hutchinson and Johnes, 2016). A more effective approach would be to strive to eliminate this attainment gap between the FSM and non-FSM students before they sit the 11-plus examination as this method does not undermine the interests of non-FSM students who have had their place potentially occupied by a student who achieved a ‘qualifying’ score (EPI, 2016). An example of this is the ‘Sure Start’ program that encouraged educational intervention before the age of four in order to minimise the developing gaps. However, studies following on from the program did not find that the intervention made any significant difference and instead caused spikes in depressive symptoms in mothers living in close proximity to the programs (Department for Education, 2010).

To this end, it is evident from this section that disadvantaged students suffer several educational barriers that stem from a wealth disparity. These barriers act to such an extent that sometimes they alone can be attributable to a proportion of students who either are not granted a grammar place despite passing or those who even fail the test, such impacts are not limited to the 11-plus, instead these impacts perpetuate themselves throughout a student’s education often resulting in lower attainment at GCSE and A-Level standard (Andrews et al., 2016).

However, private tuition is not limited to core academic subjects, it can also be utilised to introduce new techniques and activities to musical or foreign language enthusiasts as this will propel their development and creativity. Such skills may be advantageous in a university or job application thus increasing the likelihood they will be successful over a similar disadvantaged student who does not possess these skills. Whilst attempts have been made by educational institutions, these attempts remain merely that – the nature of the problem illustrated throughout this section necessitates a combined effort from the educational system, the families of these students and the government which has not yet been achieved, which is probably not helped the fact some tests such as the 11-plus are subject to county / local authority variations.

3.3 11-plus in the UK and county variations

Across England, disadvantaged students experience different levels of acceptance into grammar schools either due to the demographic of their residence being more affluent or the 11-plus attributing more weighting to certain portions of the exam which those who are disadvantaged typically perform worse on compared to more affluent peers. In the latter, the eleven-plus (11-plus) is an examination administered to some students in their final year of primary education (at the beginning of year 6 and the end of KS2) in order to determine whether they can be admitted to their selected grammar school or if unsuccessful, to being their educational journey at a non-selective secondary modern. Therefore, such schools utilise academic selection as a means of determining admissions. While at the point of conception in 1944, the entrance tests were designed to reflect general intelligence (akin to an IQ test), the tests developed to then measure ability across a broader range of aptitudes, which can now encompass English, Mathematics, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning, or combinations of such.

However, seeking common ground between the 11-plus and an IQ test can be contentious: how effectively can IQ be measured, how valid is that measurement and what does that actually mean? As recent developments in the human intelligence field would suggest that there are additional factors comprising intelligence such as social intelligence (Maas et al., 2014). While this time period is close to the testing period for many independent schools (common entrance 11+), the most common entrance pathway for an independent school is admission at the age of 13 following the 13+ Common Entrance Examinations. Given the nature of the 11-plus, it is considered a high-stake test on the basis that children are only allowed one attempt at the tests with "the consequences far-reaching and irreversible" (Gardner and Cowan, 2005, Page 146). Robert Coe, the Director of the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University has since declared that the:

> "*concept of ability is very problematic and comes with a lot of other baggage… whatever system you use it is imprecise, there are false positives and negatives and probably more of those than people realise… we are interested in trying to make the system fairer. Even though it is a murky world there are lots of things we can do to make the system better".* (EPI, 2016).

Such a statement expresses the difficulty in designing an exam that is both capable of accurately establishing ability whilst remaining 'tutor-proof' – a statement I take much umbrage at given my own experiences with the hundreds of successful students under my tutelage who were prepared under exactly the opposite premise – that the tests were absolutely not tutor-proof. To my mind, the notion that the 11-plus tests (least of all any type of test) is somehow completely resistant to the benefits provided by a highly competent and professional tutor is not only absurd and illogical, but entirely without merit or support within the academic scholarship which unfairly deflect attention and focus away from this important area.

These difficulties have always been historically recognised. Indeed, in the midst of WW2, Churchill's coalition government sought to plan for a new education system fit for a post-war Britain, which led to the Education Act 1944. As part of this process, a Committee of the

Secondary School Examinations Council was set up, and chaired by Sir Cyril Norwood, described as 'one of the most prominent and influential English educators of the past century' (McCulloch, 2016). The resulting 'Norwood' report of 1943 sought to educate a 'new aristocracy of intellect to replace the aristocracy of birth and wealth' with the top 15% of children eligible to attend Grammar Schools on the basis of their intelligence' (Norwood Report, 1943). At the heart of the Norwood report was the assumption of the Committee that intelligence could be objectively measured in 'intelligence' or 'performance tests', however. Within only a few years, debate around the appropriateness of the 'intelligence' test intensified, with a number of authorities banning the use of intelligence testing altogether: instead providing places on the basis of teacher references and an English composition paper.

However, the specifics of the Norwood Report never suggested the sole use of intelligence tests. The Report was clear in its recommendation that the process of differentiation should begin in the primary stage where teachers can first form a judgement on their students. Consequently, the report declared:

We would regard the judgement of the teacher - based upon observation of the classroom work, the general interests and certain qualities, as for example, power of sustained effort, shown by the pupil - as the most important factor to be taken into consideration in the recommendation of the appropriate education for him… Such a record, compiled by teachers trained to observe and to reflect upon their observations, we regard as the best single means at present available of discovering special interest and aptitude and general level of intelligence. Some teachers would wish to use as a supplementary method of arriving at a true judgement the tests which are generally known as 'intelligence' tests, 'performance' tests and the like (Norwood Report, Page 17).

In fact, the Norwood Report even qualified their suggestion around the use of intelligence tests:

Hitherto tests differentiating type of ability have not been easy to devise, though there is some evidence that recent investigation may be more successful. If such tests are used with full consciousness of their experimental nature and their proper application, they may in our opinion be used to advantage in combination with the school record based upon the judgement of the teacher. (Norwood Report, Page 17)

In a follow up report published 30 years later, the Public Schools Commission looked again at secondary education and the 11-plus. In the Donnison Report of 1970, a volte-face was evidenced in relation to the role of teacher assessments, however. At page 173, the report declared “Rating by teachers is also influenced by factors not directly related to a child’s ability…[and] are even less successful in predicting future academic achievements than intelligence tests” (Donnison Report, 1970, p.173). At the same time, the report also recognised the limitations of intelligence tests:

At the extreme upper end of the ability range, testing becomes more than usually hazardous: indeed, the reliability of the tests decreases at both extremes of ability. For gifted eleven-year-olds special tests would be required, more like those normally used for 13 or 14-year-old children. These would not be the kind most children are used to, and special coaching could distort the results. (Donnison Report, 1970, p.173).

The report then concedes: “Moreover, factors of interest, motivation and personality determine the degree to which that potential is realised and the manner and slant of the achievement. Many psychologists claim that beyond a minimum threshold level of intelligence, achievement increasingly becomes a function of interest and motivation.” (Donnison Report, 1970, p.173). This reveals that historically there has been a constant tussle around the appropriateness of the admission regime for grammar school entry.

In any event, over the past several decades, both the number of grammar schools within England, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as the number of students enrolled in grammar schools have significantly decreased, with Wales no longer having any grammar schools. In 1970, over 1000 grammar schools existed housing approximately 20% of all students (DfE, 2019). Following years of continuous diminishment in the number of grammar schools operating within the UK stemming from the issuing of circular 10/65 which encouraged non-selective schools over grammar schools, a total of 164 schools seemed the point of equilibrium until two grammars merged within Kent bringing the number to 163 (Danechi, 2020). As a result of the significant decrease in the overall number of schools available, the competition for each space increased fiercely with the Department of Education finding that two thirds of all grammar school were full or over-accommodating their pre-determined capacity whereas this was only the case for 15% of state schools (Department of Education, 2019).

Geographical distribution of grammar schools has persisted as a topic for debate as it reinforces the notion of geographical discrimination, with the greatest proportion of grammar schools residing in the South East of England, and zero in the North East or Wales (DfE, 2018). Further studies conducted by the Department of Education (2019) found that 13% of all secondary pupils located in the South East attended a secondary grammar school, with the South West maintaining the second highest proportion with 7% which suggest that it is more likely for a student to achieve a place in one of these schools as more places are available compared to other parts of the country where there may only be one grammar school in an entire region. Not only does this present obvious travel and logistical challenges to students who may have to travel longer distances to attend, but Cook (2016) has demonstrated that students living within selective areas but attending a state school will perform to a lower academic standard compared to similar students from a non-selective area. However, the reasoning provided for this by Gorard & Siddiqui (2018) would suggest that it is only because grammar schools naturally attract the greatest proportion of high achieving students from an area and when two peer groups are controlled then the difference between the grammars and non-selective are no greater than expected and assert there is no 'evidence base for a policy of increasing selection' (Gorard and Siddiqui, 2018, p.1).

Generally, it is accepted that the 11-plus exam in Kent remains the most competitive and notorious 11-plus in the country (Cribb et al., 2013; KCC, 2016; Allen et al., 2017). Kent encapsulates both rural and urban areas with vastly varying levels of affluence, typically the average family income is higher than other areas of the country as presented by the fact only 9.5% of pupils enrolled in secondary education in Kent are eligible for free school meals compared the national average of 13.2% (DfE, 2016). Students attending grammar schools within Kent performed to a higher academic standard than their peers at non-selective schools within the area meaning that it would be beneficial for students to attend the grammar from an attainment perspective – albeit when accounting for cognitive ability, prior achievement and socio-economic this difference is claimed to be less than a 1/10 of a GCSE grade (Smith-Woolley et al., 2018). Thus, any means of advantage were sought and inevitably this led to the utilization of teachers either during school hours or after school preparing their students for their exams – this problem quickly compounded ultimately resulting in Kent Council banning the practice and expressly prohibiting teachers from carrying out 11-plus preparation during school hours (Read, 2015). Notably, private schools within Kent refused to recognise the ban and continued to provide extra classes and summer schools focusing on the Kent 11-plus examinations (Staufenberg & Dickens, 2016).

The Kent 11 plus exam, or commonly referred to as the 'Kent Test', is comprised of four sections (3 of which are directly included in a student's score). Each section tests a different aspects of the child's academic ability, one section is devoted to English in which comprehension and general SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) are tested, another tests the student's mathematical capabilities through a multiple choice paper and finally a reasoning test is included which is comprised of both verbal, non-verbal and spatial reasoning components. These sections have a maximum score of 138, 141 and 141 respectively – a total score of 320 or more must be achieved to meet the first criteria (with a minimum score of 106 in each section to meet the second criteria) for a student to be considered 'suitable' for the grammar school (Allen et al, 2017).

However, the second criteria typically excludes a third of those who score more than 320, for example in 2015, 7,804 students achieved a score of 320 or more but 2,616 of those were excluded due to their inability to score at least 106 in each section (Allen, 2017. Page 6). Previously, the average student eligible for free school meals ('FSM') would score significantly lower than the average non-FSM student predominantly due to the unequal weighting of the reasoning section to the exams (it used to maintain a two-thirds weighting). Explanations for such a difference between the scores was attributed to the fact reasoning was not generally taught within primary schools, instead private tuition provided the exposure students needed to these types of questions – a tool those who are entitled to free school meals are unlikely to find accessible (Allen et all, 2017, p.7). In 2014, the decision was made to reduce the weighting of the section to one third in the hope of reducing the impact social inequality had on the ability of a student to perform well on an exam, with more recent data suggesting this has impacted the cohort of students scoring highly in that the ratio between non-FSM students and FSM students average aggregated scores has decreased from 1.1 to 1.07 over a two year period.

Interestingly, as Allen (2017) notes, there is another avenue for admission if the examination route does not avail a student. The additional method is to gain admission via a headteacher's panel which involves the student's headteacher bringing the assessment of that child along with further evidence of academic capability to a panel of other local primary and secondary education headteachers, a decision is then made regarding how well that child would place within a grammar school (Kent City Council, 2016). Studies have been conducted into the effect of social inequities throughout this process, with Read concluding that headteacher panels in the East admitted a greater proportion of students compared to the Western panels – with the Eastern areas home to a greater number of FSM students and generally a less affluent population (cited in King, 2016).

Read (cited in King, 2016) attributes this fact to the evidence suggesting that FSM students perform higher in their KS2 tests compared to their 11-plus examination, despite this Read also notes that the Eastern areas do facilitate more FSM students entering grammar schools simply because there are more available places. However, upon a deeper investigation into the probability an FSM student compared to a non-FSM student will be approved at the headteacher panel, it was found that there was no significant difference found, which suggests that a student's socio-economic background does not act as a prohibiting factor in this instance (Allen, 2017, p.12).

Several provisions are suggested by Allen (2017, p.12) and allude to the necessity for a provisional compensation to be awarded to students from a disadvantaged background, particularly those who are eligible for FSM. Allen suggests that an adjustment factor should be introduced that is determined by historical KS2 and 11-plus data correlations as well as the "poverty status" of the child. Whilst this thesis acknowledges the incorporation of such into King Edward's VI 11-plus regime, it veers towards concerns regarding the long-term sustainability and considers such a target to be extremely optimistic given the challenges in determining a 'poverty threshold' combined with the need to unanimously agree on how historical data will be utilised – not only for current cohort as a whole but then each individual position irrespective of background until the adjustment factor is taken into account. Furthermore, the exact adjustment factor needed to overcome the differing impact tuition has on the different components of the exam as well as the impact private tuition has on different students will present further challenges (Jensen, 1980).

Grammar schools within the UK have been subject to severe critique for relying on an examination sat by a student of less than 11 years of age, allowing for inequalities to seed within the infrastructure of the educational system (Allen et al., 2017). Given that the socio-economic background of a student will play a pivotal role in the development of that child's academic ability throughout their educational years (Chowdry et al., 2010), some academics conclude that the growing dependency social mobility has on grammar school admittance simply replaces the "social barrier of fee paying with one that tends to create an educational elite" (Chowdry et al., 2010). Arguably, this conclusion was also made decades before private tuition and 11-plus exam coaching became as prevalent as it is today. Indeed, grammar schools can be perceived as a window dressing for the wealth disparity that educationally and residentially segregates the population as the wealthier families generally spend the greatest amount on private tuition for their children who consequently are more likely to attend grammar schools as a result (Cullinane et al., 2017).

Several authorities around England have attempted to bridge this gap by designing a new 'tutor-proof' 11-plus exam, both Kent and Buckinghamshire have introduced their independent version which similarly diverge from the mainstream content of the exam to place a greater weighting on school taught curriculum, the additional curriculum includes English focused content which is notoriously the subject in which private tuition has the smallest impact (Rushforth, 2011). However, this did not yield the results envisaged, rather only a 1% downwards shift in the proportion of the cohort that passed the entrance exam who were previously privately educated in some way, correspondingly, those who had not engaged in a form of private education experienced a 1% increase (BBC, 2015).

Buckinghamshire also introduced their new 11-plus examination for the cohort of 2014, its aim was to improve its resilience to targeted tuition. However, the data illustrated that the newly designed examination impeded those from state school more than improving their chances of passing, the pass rate for students from state schools fell 3% (23% to 20%), these levels have not returned to the old exam proportions (Hickman et al., 2016). In contrast, those who had experienced a form of private tuition saw their total pass percentage increase 10% (53% to 63%) which would suggest Buckinghamshire have not been successful in their approach. Importantly, Buckinghamshire is characterized with a significant distinction in that the 11-plus examinations act as an 'opt-out' system. Therefore, every pupil is automatically enrolled to sit the exams unless they choose not to, meaning that the majority of students will sit the 11-plus - even those who fall extremely short of the pass mark. Factoring this in with the expanded demographic of those included means a greater proportion of disadvantaged students are being enrolled in the 11-plus examinations as opposed to an 'opt-in' system.

However, this does not simply increase the number of disadvantaged students gaining places at a grammar school, instead it significantly reduces the proportion of disadvantaged students who receive a place even though there is a much greater number of disadvantaged students sitting the exam. It does though provide a much larger basis of data to better reflect the true nature of students sitting the exams, as students are assessed that otherwise perhaps would not have 'opted in'. Perhaps this should be encouraged across all local authorities with grammar schools in to ensure that a lack of awareness of a student, parent or legal guardian does no inhibit them having an opportunity to succeed at the tests – though this will of course mean a larger administrative burden in conducting more tests.

Ultimately within the UK, the literature suggests that the 11-plus examination process is not tailored to support those from disadvantaged backgrounds (CSJ, 2016) – meaning it could be seen as a convenient method by which the wealthy may propel their children into well-performing grammar schools without the expense of paying for the equivalently performing private schools (Allen et al., 2017). Whilst attempts have been made by the 11-plus providers to understand and counteract the impact that social inequalities have on the likelihood of a child passing the examinations, the literature and statistics available would suggest none have produced the envisaged results. With many of those in influential academic positions refusing to detail the intricacies of their examination regimes on the basis that the testing regime is confidential and subject to intellectual property protections, this area continues to remain afflicted, shrouded and divisive. The impact of this on important factors such as social mobility will now be considered.

3.4 The role and impact of tuition on 11-plus Outcomes - social mobility

Over the past half-century much research has been conducted into the impact of tuition (and the various tuition formats) on general attainment levels. For example, Hartley (1977) conducted a meta-analysis of several different private tuition techniques in mathematics, with the analysis demonstrating that one-to-one private tuition was by far the strongest and most influential technique in boosting achievement. However, this study should be approached with caution given the lack of control groups in the studies involved in her analysis. Despite this shortfall, the conclusion was replicated in other studies such as by Bloom (1984). This study explored the impact of conventional learning, mastered learning and private tuition on the academic achievement of students. To further increase the reliability of the conclusions drawn by this study, it was repeated four times with students varying in age and chosen subjects. The results identified a clear trend: the students who were in the private tuition group experienced an increase in academic performance by two standard deviations whereas the mastery learning group (those not allowed to progress until 90% attainment was achieved on the prior topic) only experienced one standard deviation – the conventional learning group was used as a control. This was labelled the '2 sigma effect', which found that on average an individual average student who is privately tutored will outperform 98% of their peers in the conventional learning group.

Such an effect was first alluded to in the doctoral theses of both Anania (1981) and Burke (1982). Bray (1999) undertook research in several countries, and he too found mixed results: that private tuition does not always translate into a higher level of performance and that more research was required to establish what it was specifically about private tuition that boosts performance – something which Bray, returning to this question in 2010, recognised was still difficult to answer due to not only the conceptual challenges ('what is shadow education') and the methodological issues, but this was improving due to the 'increased volume of research' (Bray, 2010, p.11).

Notably, such conclusions have not been replicated consistently in studies across the globe, with several academics in fact finding the adverse - that private tuition either has no effect on academic performance or even a negative impact, resulting in the topic remaining heavily debated from each side. For example, in direct contrast to the earlier review of literature in this thesis, Wolf's (2002) meta-analysis study found that the overwhelming majority of the countries which were included in the study showed negative correlations between the use of private tuition and educational attainment rates (with the exception being the Republic of Korea). Other studies conducted by the Ministry of Education in Egypt (1993) and Fergany (1994) echo these findings, with no positive correlation found between private tuition and higher educational attainment. However, as noted above, this may be because of the varying cultural attitudes towards private tuition such as in many of these where "tutoring is primarily a remedial measure" as opposed to providing a student with a competitive advantage (Rushforth, 2011, p.21) which would explain the absence of higher attainment rates for students in receipt of private tuition given that the aim of the tuition is to encourage average or de minimis attainment. Likewise, as pointed out by Bray (2010) much confusion persists in the data as a result of differing approaches to what constitutes private tuition, issues around translation or misunderstandings, or simply due to the fact ‘for cultural and other reasons pupils may be unwilling to indicate’ (page 6) if they have a tutor or how many hours they spend a week on private tutoring.

Kang (2007) observed that there is a significant rise in grades generated from the provision of private tuition between South Korean students. However, while the impact may appear minimal (10% additional disbursement on private tuition results in a 1.1 % higher test score) in highly competitive, high-stake testing, this could be the difference between a student winning a place at a selective school, and not. While there are fewer studies to have been conducted to date in European countries, research in Germany, Turkey and the UK note a number of benefits connected with private tuition. For example, in Turkey, Tansel and Bircan (2005) showed that those who had received private tuition achieved higher grades in the university entrance examination. In Germany, Mischo and Haag (2002) found that tuition was related to developing performance (approximately one grade) in all subjects (Math, English, Latin, and French), as well as building self-confidence and a reduction in test anxiety.

Furthermore, in the UK, Ireson and Rushforth (2005) explored the impact of private tuition on lower secondary (GCSE) test results across a number of demographics and characteristics such as parental occupation and education. Out of the sample of 302 year 11 students across 7 mixed secondary schools, the grades of those in receipt of private tuition were measured against those who were not. The results revealed that private tuition had a statistically significant overall effect on test performance, with students in receipt of tuition scoring grades that were on average 0.2 units higher than students that did not have tuition. For Mathematics, this represented increased attainment by half of an entire GCSE grade. However, this impact was variable across various groups of students with girls showcasing a more limited benefit compared to boys in maths (albeit there was no gender attainment difference as a result of private tuition for English scores).

According to Williams (2018), private tuition can have a variety of impacts. The most commonly measured impact within the academic research is the effect of private tuition on a student's performance in tests. Wittwer (2014) noted that most families presume that private tuition has beneficial impacts with students believing that investing in private tuition allows better academic performance in schooling and will help them to make a significant improvement in educational achievements. Despite the fact that the above, more recent research, would suggest a high degree of likelihood that private tuition has positive effects on achievement, Bray and Lykins' (2012, pp.32-36) note in their report that care should be taken in generalising the link between private tuition and student performance given the many variables to private tuition at play – classes size, tutoring duration and timing, tutoring model, motivation of the tutors and the tutees, students' level, the quality of the tutor etc. Furthermore, logically, private tuition could be correlated to increased performance simply because it affords more time in which students could learn content as well as boost their familiarity with different types of questions so they are more confident tackling said questions in the examination.

In many research contexts, examinations appear to be the primary motivation behind a student's engagement with private tuition (Hamid, Sussex and Khan, 2009). As countries seek to create and improve their schooling systems, committing their students to take various examinations and tests during their study years, tests can become both more challenging and frequent (Budiene and Zabulionis, 2006). These changes naturally drive the demand for private tuition as examinations are the main reason why students take tutoring (Baker, 2012). Moreover, Reay and William (1999) argue students feel their performance in examinations impacts their achievement in schooling generally. Bray and Lykins (2012) find that many students consider good examination results provide them with the opportunity to obtain access to highly rated schools and universities and provide better possibilities for improved income and way of life in the future, the extent to which this true however has not been observed appropriately enough and ultimately remains an relatively unsubstantiated logical conclusion.

Selective schools are generally the first instance where students will 'compete' for a place at an educational institution and given the benefits to academic performance associated with grammar schools, this is possibly one of the most important exams for students. Currently these schools accommodate approximately 5% of students within England, spread between 163 wholly selective schools (Andrews et al., 2016). In order for students to be granted a place at such a school they must first complete the 11-plus examinations – how highly they score in these exams will determine whether these students are awarded a place. Frequently, parents will seek any tool available to them that will provide their children a competitive advantage, these may take the form of DVDs, workbooks, or private tuition.

The effect of the latter on the outcome of the 11-plus for a given student was examined by Bunting and Mooney (2001) who studied the effect of tuition prior to sitting five 11-plus exams on a sample size of over 550 students. Two groups were formed, one was exposed to three hours of specialized tuition prior to them sitting each exam, the other group was provided three hours of tuition after they had completed three of the exams. The first group significantly outperformed the latter in terms of self-improvement. Students in the first group more than doubled their original score by the end of the study, the findings of this study corroborate the suggestion of Cohen et al., (1982) that "structured tutoring programs produce especially strong effects". Thus, it could be concluded that students who engage in specialized private tuition will generally score higher on the 11-plus compared to what they would have scored without the tuition. However, such a tool can seem allusive to families from a low socio-economic background as they may not be able to burden the financial costs.

Consequently, students from a higher socio-economic background are more likely to engage with private tuition for the 11-plus and attain places at these selective schools as reinforced by the proportion of FSM students enrolled in grammar schools compared to state schools, 2.5% compared to 13.2% respectively (Andrews et al., 2016) as well as the proportion of FSM students who have received private tuition (17%) compared to the average for students not in receipt of free school meals (26%) (Sutton Trust, 2016, p.3). Students who do not qualify as eligible for free school meals as their families are from a better socio-economic background are more likely to be able to engage in tuition as the cost of the practice will not be as burdening. This coupled with the generally higher degree of education teachers in grammar schools possess may account for the huge disparity between the achievement rate of the government's expected performance standard (5 good GCSEs, two must be English and Mathematics)(Allen, 2016), almost every student enrolled in a grammar school will achieve this (96.7%) compared to approximately half of those that attend a non-selective school (56.5%).

In addition to these schools maintaining a higher rate of students achieving at least five 'A*-C', they also can be characterized as carrying a huge "value-added score". A "value-added score" refers to the magnitude of a positive and negative impact a given school has on a student's academic achievement compared to a national average. Within grammar schools this score, on average, is +24.8 (Andrews et al., 2016) which is almost incomprehensible when equated to grade mark-ups. For reference a +24.8 score is equivalent to a student scoring half a grade higher in eight different subjects, equal to four entire grade boosts (Andrews et al., 2016). On the other hand, the value-added score for students at non-selective schools falls drastically from this value, dependent upon whether these schools were situated in a partially selective area or a wholly selective area decided the respective value-added scores of -1.6 and -6.7 (Andrews et al., 2016, p.30). Such a monumental difference between these scores could act as the sole reason for a student from a grammar school may achieve a place at university over a similar student from a non-selective school as their GCSE scores may prevent them from applying to the course or even in some instances prevent them from gaining a place on an A-Level course. However, drawing inferences from value-added on scores may introduce greater ambiguity regarding the academic effects of attending a grammar school. For example, Gorard & Siddiqui (2018) and Perry (2016) both express their concerns about accrediting too much weight to value-added on scores as they have been found to be "profoundly misleading" and lead the questioning on the validity of such a measure, resulting in Gorard opining that he does not "think it works, or has ever worked". Similar concerns are raised by Gorard (2018) regarding the novel approach of "Progress 8" suggesting that it is "really, really flaky" and in order for value to be added to one pupil it must be taken from another due to the 'zero-sum' nature of the problem.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the findings of Andrews et al. (2016) demonstrate that regardless of which factor you assess, students who attend a selective school will perform better than the equivalent student at a non-selective school and no other literature reviewed disputed such a finding. However, both Gorard and Jerrim (2018) contend when appropriate controls are introduced then there is not such a significant difference, but rather only a difference of 1/10 of a grade. With such a series of influential events following a test that a child will sit when they are less than 11 years of age, it amplifies the necessity to reduce and/or remove any significant influence the child's family background could have on their ability to perform in the exam. How this is to be achieved remains another issue and whilst the general consensus is that "there is no such thing as a tutor-proof test" (May, 2016), it has been speculated that "many selective schools are already employing much smarter tests that assess the true potential of every child. So new grammars will be able to select in a fair and meritocratic way, not on the ability of parents to pay" (May, 2016). However, the author contends that this state of affairs is yet to be reached as currently within the UK education system there is no educational test that remains “tutor-proof” -as they either take the form of a curricula based examination or an IQ test involving verbal and non-verbal reasoning, which many academics consider can be see improved results through tuition (Rushforth, 2011; Bloom, 1984).

Therefore, the wealth divide is becoming further exacerbated by affluent families maintaining the greatest proportion of utilization of the UK private tuition market. This is as those in positions at selective schools are more likely to achieve better marks, allowing them to proceed to higher levels of education which carry greater earning potentials (BIS, 2013). Social mobility has long been linked to educational achievement, the greater a student’s achievement the more likely they are to increase their affluence and social status (Iannelli & Paterson, 2005). Indeed, a recent ESRC briefing (2012) illustrated the link between disadvantaged students and their lack of socio-emotional skills within the educational system and how that correlates to their academic achievement and ultimately a lack of social mobility. Boliver and Swift’s (2011) paper echoed this point – it found that disadvantaged students attending grammar schools maintained a much greater chance of future social mobility when compared to a similar student in a non-selective secondary modern. Furthermore, they found that disadvantaged students attending grammar school were twice as likely to increase their social status to a ‘service’ level class than a student at a non-selective state secondary. Such a trend was replicated across an analysis of the average student with Boliver and Swift finding that advantaged students attending a grammar school would experience a reduced likelihood that they will experience a downwards shift in social class compared to similar students attending non-selective schools (page 100).

This is not a novel idea - students from families of a high social class (typically well educated) experience an increased likelihood of attaining more prestigious and competitive educational places and this is reflected across other cultures and countries. For example, in China even been suggested that “the Gaokao [a Chinese entrance examination] punishes those from rural areas for lacking equal educational opportunities and resources at the school stage, and justifies their inferior status with demonstratable outcomes in the examinations" (Brown et al., 2013).

However, in contrast to this, Ye Liu's quantitative study regarding the Chinese College Entrance Examinations (Gaokao) included the analysis of the socio-economic position of nearly 1000 students sitting the exams across two different provinces. The study concluded that there was no significant socio-economic correlation between students and the places they attained, albeit this conclusion is limited due to the fact it only encompassed two provinces. Other studies suggest that students situated in rural areas are less likely to receive both a competitive place at a school and private tuition (Bray & Lykins, 2012).

There are also other considerations, for example, Iannelli and Paterson (2005, p.3) acknowledge the fact that studies completed within a timely fashion of theirs may provide a type of false positive in that the "high absolute rates of mobility" were actually a product of "structural change in the labour market". Therefore, studies concluding high levels of social mobility within this particular time period must be adjusted with regard to the changes in the labour market. Iannelli and Paterson (2005, p.4) also provide reasoning for the stagnation in social mobility they observed in the latter years of their study, a natural limit has already been reached by and the number of individuals in surplus of professional and occupational positions has grossly compiled. Looking to the future impacts of this stagnation, two possibilities are provided: the first depicts a scenario in which the expansion of the educational system persists causing the proportional disparity gap between the more and lesser affluent students to decrease, provided the attainment levels of the advantaged students plateaus. Secondly, a potential development of educational policy may be invoked that differentiates top-end achievers by introducing varying educational fees – the highest paying labour market positions may be routed to the graduates of high-status universities. Consequently, "social fluidity would at best remain unchanged and could start to worsen for the first time in at least half a century" (Ibid, p.4).

Bunting and Mooney's (2001) study in addition to the other literature reviewed within this section have added considerable weight to the contention that private tuition does positively impact a child's performance - not only in 11-plus examinations but also at various points throughout their academic journey. Following the benefits this tuition provides a students, they are more likely to win competitive places within grammar schools as well as universities - providing them a surplus of resources and opportunities to solidify or even raise their societal position, invariably to the detriment of students from a disadvantaged background who are more likely to retain their social class. Indeed, not only do pupils eligible for FSM at selective schools outperform pupils eligible for FSM at non-selective schools, though as selective schools tend to draw their students from a narrower band of prior attainment, there is less variation between characteristics in selective schools (Andrews et al., 2018, page 32). This adds credence to the notion that grammar schools do not select 'on ability because wealthy families can pay tutors to help their children get through tests…[as] there is no such thing as a tutor proof test' (May, 2016). With the above literature in mind, this thesis will now turn to discuss it within and against the broader focal points of this thesis.

4. DISCUSSION

Forming the foundations of the discussion are four key discussion points derived from the literature review. The first, arising from 2.1, seeks to discuss the status and utilisation of private tuition in other countries including England and Wales, and to what extent culture is linked to this. Following on from this, the next discussion point will draw from 2.2 to discuss whether county variation has had a significant impact on the proportion of disadvantaged students passing the 11-plus and what the variances in testing regimes may mean as part of the wider 11-plus. Next, in 2.3, the impact of attending a grammar school following a successful 11-plus entrance examination is explored. Finally, the last focus point for discussion, 2.4, discusses the persistent issue of underrepresentation of disadvantaged students within grammar schools and what may be causing this, how it may be improved and why the access to grammar schools is so disproportionate for disadvantaged students and what this means for social mobility.

4.1 To what extent do country variations and culture influence the uptake of private tuition

Comparing Eastern civilisations to Western civilisations will be a useful tool in this regard as they notoriously differ heavily within their cultural norms. For example, in Japan the traditional cultural norm for students following their high school graduation has been to become a 'ronin' ('wanderer') for a year to undertake intense preparation for their university examinations. Whilst the prevalence of this has calmed with the increased technological advances, it is still common with one in three graduates willing to 'wander' (Stevenson & Baker, 1992). It is also during these times that a student will often attend yokibo – an intensive shadow education preparatory course which varies in cost up to $20,000 dependent upon the course. As Tsukada (1988) notes, this cost is further compounded by the living costs of a student, thus this particular form of shadow education is likely to inhibit access to those from a poor socio-economic background who simply do not have the financial capability to fund such a venture thus impairing those from a disadvantaged background. Consequentially, this impacts the disadvantaged at a much greater proportion than any other party as a student's likelihood of attending university after engaging in yokibo increases anywhere between 16%-25% (Stevenson & Baker, 1992, p.1652). Therefore, in similarity with the research from the Sutton Trust in the UK (2016; 2019), this is an example of an existing and hard-rooted historical disparity in access to opportunity dependent on the financial resources of the family. As Theresa May, the former UK Prime Minister stated in her 2016 grammar school address:

> *We are effectively saying to poorer and some of the most disadvantaged children in our country that they can't have the kind of education their richer counterparts can enjoy… So as we radically expand the number of good school places available to all families – not just those who can afford to buy an expensive house, pay for an expensive private school, or fund the extra tuition their child needs to succeed – I want to encourage more people, schools and institutions with something to offer to come forward and help.* (May, 2016).

Similarly, in Nepal (Subedi, 2018) reports that specialised 'hostels' are increasingly being built by private schools and other institutions which charge a premium for access to these facilities. These facilities provide specific private tuition for either the examinations set by the private schools themselves or other institutions – there is little doubt that a private school running a hostel charging a premium to tutor their exam to students will disproportionately benefit the affluent students who can afford this service compared to similar achieving students who cannot afford this service. Despite attempts made in Nepal to alleviate this problem via community schools establishing similar hostels, it has not been all that effective considering many of private hostels tutor for exams they administer themselves (generally more prestigious and competitive schools), so preparation was generally not sought for those seeking to attend community schools (Subedi, 2018). In many cases, these community hostels simply focus on helping those that are underachieving to achieve a pass grade rather than providing tuition for those wishing to sit exams for the top schools. Ultimately, Eastern cultures still facilitate and encourage “socio-economically stratified and segregated” private tuition (Majumdar, 2014). This is an important observation to make, as some schools within England are now beginning to host private Summer Schools (mainly independent grammar schools), so careful attention will be needed to ensure specialist entrance exam preparation or insight is not provided.

Furthermore, this thesis has also found a gradual transition in the use of private tuition in the West (including Eastern European countries such as Azerbaijan) by more affluent families that are utilising this service to ensure their child has every competitive advantage possible over their peers, particularly in relation to high-stake entrance examinations. Boyle (2015) has previously labelled this phenom an educational “arms race” in which disadvantaged students are entrapped within the metaphorical whirlpool of mainstream education and have the greatest challenge against the maelstrom, compared to more affluent students with easy access to exam coaching and preparation from quality private tuition. This is why disadvantaged students are said to be ‘entrenched’ (Ireson & Rushforth, 2011, p.12) within the mainstream schooling system with so few able to struggle against the flow of the current of privilege. Baker et al., (2014) reinforces this conclusion by demonstrating FSM students are much less likely to engage in private tuition compared to affluent peers.

Within the UK, the access to quality private tuition is also seemingly prone to a natural gatekeeping forces which separates the rich from the poor – exacerbated by the fact that the most competent, experienced and proven private tutors typically command the highest rates. This particular phenom is reinforced by the hegemonic capitalistic nature of the UK, indeed Hilary (2013) found that inequalities between class in the UK (particularly the very rich and those poverty stricken) had only continued to grow resulting in a “more unequal society than any time in the past 40 years”. This suggests that the opportunity gap will continue to widen if no new effective provisions are made. This is further confirmed by my own experiences: top independent schools providing model papers with detailed answers to pupils at their fee-paying junior schools on the basis they are kept ‘private’. Suffice to say, as these papers are not publicly available and tend to closely match the format and exam style of the actual exam they can be an extremely valuable resource. While it is important to note that this experience is purely with independent entrance examinations and relates to students sitting entrance and scholarship examinations, there is a risk this too could occur in the case of selective grammar schools with their traditional ‘feeder’ schools.

A review of private tuition in other countries also illuminated a number of other interesting statistics. For example, in Azerbaijan, private tuition serves a much greater proportion of disadvantaged students - in total almost 90% of students included in Silova & Bray’s study (2006) engaged with private tuition on a regular basis during which a less ‘exam-centred’ approach is taken to provide an holistic tuition process focusing on the curriculum in a supportive manner. However, Silova & Bray also found that the socio-economic background of a student influenced whether they were able to access either one-on-one or grouped tuition. Perhaps this is something the UK should consider post-covid, as the provision of group tuition could cast a far cheaper and wider net across a larger base of disadvantaged students. However, care should be taken to ensure the outcomes still remain high, meaning further studies are likely to be needed on optimal private tuition group sizes and formats. While historical and cultural influence is most accredited to the vast proportion of students engaging in private tuition in Azerbaijan - the mainstream schooling sector has historically been incapable of providing ‘high quality education’ (Silova, 2009) which is an important factor when considering the high take-up of tuition.

Ultimately, the literature guides this paper to posit that Eastern and Western countries and cultures (at least those explored in the literature review) are largely ‘two sides of the same coin’ when held in regard to the accessibility offering afforded to private tuition and its utility within each country. It finds that while there may be stark and obvious cultural differences between East and West, when it comes to private tuition, it is commonly used as a means of securing an advantage – be it entrance examinations for schools or universities. Even where private schools do not exist, private tuition and examination coaching is wielded by affluent families to secure places for their children which enables them to maintain or advance their societal standing.

At the same time, all the countries that were reviewed showcased how this process was not only on the increase, but how in many instances it had become almost institutionalised – with considerable crossover in the provision of these services by the target schools and universities themselves. As such, in every country (independent of their approach to private tuition) the educational segregation of the rich and poor via the availability of private tuition was permitted, consolidated and on the increase. While it is noted that the severity of this problem is subject to international variation, ultimately capital acts as a key determinant for access to this important resource. In the next part of this discussion, the 11-plus examinations within the UK will be discussed, alongside what the existence of county variations within the testing regimes means, especially in relation to the proportion of disadvantaged students passing the 11-plus.

4.2 Why have county variations not had a significant effect on the proportion of disadvantaged children passing the 11-plus.

In 2013, the Sutton Trust (2013) published figures illustrating that students eligible for free school meals contributed to just 2.7% of the total cohort of students enrolled in grammar school education compared to the state school average of 18%. Sir Michael Wilshaw, the Ofsted Chief also addressed this gap writing in the Observer in 2013 in which he declared how: "grammar schools are stuffed full of middle-class kids" and only "a tiny percentage are on free school meals" chaperoning his belief that he does not "think they work" at increasing social mobility within the UK. However, a more optimistic approach was adopted by Allen, writing in The Guardian, who argues that grammar schools:

"could be fantastic vehicle for social mobility if any poor kids actually went to them. That's the basic problem. Of course, they could be good for social mobility, because what we know about grammar schools is that the children who get to go do better as a result." (Weale and Adams, 2015, p.3).

Getting more disadvantaged students into grammar school is however a complex challenge, with some grammar schools seeking to mitigate the impact of private tuition by devising 'tutor-proof' tests or introducing quotas for students in receipt of FSM. The Guardian reported in 2014 that over half of the grammar schools in England were currently planning to afford priority to disadvantaged students in their future admissions process. For example, both the King Edward VI (2020) grammar school in Birmingham as well as the Rugby High School for Girls in Warwickshire have introduced a fixed number of places specifically for disadvantaged students. Prima facie, this appears to be a significant stride towards ensuring more disadvantaged students enrol in a grammar school but in reality, this is a limited move that does not impact the number of disadvantaged students actually passing the 11-plus examinations. This would require a change to the examination format itself (or the weightings of its respective parts). For example, the Kent test reduced the weighting of the reasoning section of the 11-plus from two-thirds to one third in a bid to reduce the impact a wealth disparity could have on how well a child performed in particular sections to the exam (Allen, 2017).

Despite this, the reasoning portion still remains the section of the test in which FSM and non-FSM students have the greatest score disparity (at 7.7 points) closely behind is the mathematics portion in which there is a 6.8 point difference. As discussed previously, private tuition has a greater impact on Mathematics than English. Consequently, Allen et al., (2016, p.10) opines that "if the 11-plus is a dice, then the reasoning component contributes to the dice being loaded against disadvantaged students". The government have since introduced pupil premium credit and provided differing sums to different counties dependent upon their current state of grammar school affairs and the proportion of disadvantaged students enrolled in them. It was first envisaged to act as a remedying factor for the wealth disparity and the resource differential that gave rise to the disparity between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. This may come in the form of additional classes for Mathematics and English which had the aim of reducing the point difference between FSM and non-FSM students. However, the 'pupil premium' plan has seemingly failed to increase the number of students classed as eligible for pupil premium attaining places at grammar schools.

In fact, the number of pupil premium students enrolled in year 7 at grammar schools across England fell from 8.48% in 2017 to 8.31% in 2019 (Comprehensive Future, 2020). However, more recently, some schools have utilised their pupil premium fund to pay for private tuition for poorer students. Perhaps this specific spending is needed, as according to Burgess (2016) the parents of children sitting the 11-plus examinations felt they had to use private tutors to secure places and win the 'nuclear arms race'. This is akin to places at grammar school being the 'return' on the heavy investment made in private tuition. However, this reasoning is of course simplistic, as access to wealth and being part of a higher socio-economic position affords the students in these families a stronger basis from which to prepare for the 11-plus examinations, anyway. For this reason, a simple reconstruction of the 11-plus test to reduce or eliminate the parts of the test that may be more susceptible to exam coaching (as suggested by Andrews et al., 2016) in itself, would not be sufficient. In any event, not only would a large scale-shift in testing regime present a new period of uncertainty to many children's lives, but from a pragmatic front, would simply change the focus of a private tutors attention in preparing their students for the new examinations.

There are also other major challenges to any approach that would require a reworking of the 11-plus tests. Primarily, the organisations that create and administer the tests, such as the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring ('CEM') (formerly of Durham University's but bought by

Cambridge University Press and Cambridge assessment in 2019) exert intellectual property rights over both the examinations and the scoring processes. In fact, James Coombs, a statistician whose son sat the 11-plus examinations, took CEM to court for their refusal to release the raw score and their marking procedure following a freedom of information request. The University of Durham withheld this information on the basis it would prejudice their commercial interests and secrecy was needed to counter the effects of coaching, and their proprietary approach to test papers and marking ensured this – stating that even the release of raw data could allow tutors to reverse engineer the 'data to influence how they coach students to be successful at the tests' (ICO, 2017, p.5). Of note, in 2016 The Guardian reported that CEM's 11-plus brochure had been adapted so it "wouldn't use the term natural ability" (Millar, 2016). In the first-tier tribunal decision of Coombs v Information Commissioner and the University of Cambridge, CEM asserted they were not the origin of the term 'tutor-proof' – instead using 'tutor resistant' in their marketing material (ICO, 2020, p.6). This decision upheld the one in 2017 and considered that the release of the raw data requested would not, on balance, be in the public interest. This ruling would suggest that a review of the historical test data for the purposes of revising the 11-plus test approach is unlikely to be available to anyone outside of CEM for the foreseeable future.

More recent approaches would appear to seek to tackle the lower proportion of disadvantaged students winning places in other ways. For example, King Edward Grammars in addition to previously increasing their proportionate intake of disadvantaged students have as of 2020 established a qualifying score of 205 which if disadvantaged students from newly characterised priority areas reach will be confirmed a grammar school place (KEG, 2020). How effective this is likely to be cannot yet be determined due to the obvious lack of data though a better understanding of the impact of these measures will be available following a few examination cycles – with a lower qualifying score it is likely that this proportion will increase although this is subject to priority catchments.

If proven effective then this approach could easily be replicated across the country however again, careful considerations need to be made regarding the number of students who, as a result of the new qualifying scores, will not be granted a place (Allen, 2017). This also raises a number of other ethical questions, such as the extent to which (if any) non-disadvantaged students should vacate places in order to make room for more of the disadvantaged cohort. Further studies may also be needed to assess the impact on these students of 'losing' (or the perception of losing) their places despite possibly scoring much higher than a disadvantaged student, mental health and academic considerations should be made. As well as this, to prevent an injustice to the non-disadvantaged a comprehensive study is needed to establish how low the qualifying score should be with reference to the impact of private tuition (or lack of private tuition). By way of example, if private tuition is said to boost scores by 20%, allowing a disadvantaged student a 20% score leeway would at a simplistic level ensure the same level of opportunity.

Evidently, this area is both academically and politically sensitive – with more focused research needed to support more wide-scale proposals. Again, this thesis is angled towards discussions around the global trends of private tuition and how this may inform 11-plus testing and the consequent impacts on social mobility – not the adequacy of our schooling system in the UK or even if we should have grammar schools or 11-plus tests at all. In fact, it is broadly accepted in the academic scholarship that while "verbal and quantitative reasoning tests provide valuable information about cognitive abilities that are important to academic success", the test results are not absolutes but rather act as pointers (Lakin and Lohman, 2011). That said, while the 11-plus and selective state grammar schools still exist, a discussion about the impacts of attending a grammar school is necessary, to which endeavour this thesis will now turn.

4.3 How does attending a grammar school impact future academic outcomes

In this section of the discussion, the academic outcomes experienced by students as a result of their varying success in the 11-plus will be explored to provide an insight into whether affluence positively impacts academic achievement regardless of the academic route traversed. For over a decade it has been accepted that “grammars have a widespread, low-level, impact on pupil enrolments across the sector” (Sutton Trust, 2008). This leads this section of the discussion to consider the extent to which this persists across different affluence levels.

In non-selective areas, the academic outcomes of the average student (average referring to those from households earning close to the median amount annually) who attend a grammar school compared to a non-selective state school will experience a considerable disparity in their future academic achievement and likelihood to attend prestigious universities such as Oxbridge and other Russel Group universities (Mansfield, 2019). Coupling this with the increased likelihood that students towards the lower echelons of annual income will attend a state school, an imbalance becomes starkly apparent. On the other hand, students residing towards the upper bounds of socio-economic positioning – but not affluent enough to access private education, have a vastly increased likelihood attending a grammar school with 45% of the grammar cohort being attributable to this background (Mansfield, 2019, p.30), notably this study has been subject to academic critique as the findings have been contended by Bainbridge and other academics in the field (Macmillan et al., 2019; Allen, 2019; Brant, 2019). For example, Mansfield is criticised for failing to adopt the tried and tested category of FSM (or the ‘Long Term FSM’ as suggested by Gorard and Siddiqui, 2017) to represent disadvantaged, instead opting to use below median income families as the proxy for disadvantage – and thus encompassing many ‘lower-middle class, well-educated families’ (Burgess, 2019).

Mansfield (2019) argues that is only through these students attending grammar schools that they are able to minimise the higher education access gap between the advantaged and less advantaged. Students from these 'above-median' backgrounds attending grammar schools have a similar opportunity to their advantaged counterparts attending paid private schools to attend "highly-selective higher education" such as a Russel Group Universities (Ibid, p.27). Such a phenom does exist between students from 'below-median' backgrounds although it is to a slightly lesser extent.

Despite 76% of Local Authority Areas not hosting a grammar school, when comparing the school backgrounds of applicants to Cambridge from either a grammar school or a state selective school, the 163 grammar schools represented 45% of the applicants compared to the 55% from the 1,849 non-selective state schools – an entire order of magnitude higher (Mansfield, 2019, p.31). Ultimately, Mansfield (2019, p.33) found that regardless of geographical location, whether it be wholly selective, partially selective or non-selective, a student's likelihood of attending a selective higher university increases massively if they attend a grammar school.

However, discussion as to how controls were introduced to account for the disproportionate amount disadvantaged students contributed to the cohort compared to non-FSM peers allowing for a skewing of the results. Consequently, grammars are able to actively select the able students that would be likely to progress to these universities regardless via their entrance examinations. However, Mansfield (2019, p.34) argues that such an argument is not particularly sustained given that disadvantaged students attending grammar schools are more than twice as likely to attend Cambridge compared to their state school counterparts. Moreover, grammars are responsible for over 30% more BME (black or other minority ethic) applicants to Cambridge suggesting that they are providing more opportunity for disadvantaged students in given instances.

The Sutton Trust (2016) finds that disadvantaged students in attendance of a grammar school (irrespective of location) will "suffer marginally less educational disadvantage" compared to the non-disadvantaged students attending a grammar school. However, for those in attendance of a non-selective school in a selective authority area, they will be in receipt of a more negative result – 0.1 grades per GCSE and 0.2 grades per GCSE for disadvantaged students. Such results when controlled for prior attainment allude to socio-economic background being a deciding factor, however such conclusions have been disputed by Marks (1991) who assumes the position that "the elevation of social class into the central position in the debate is mistaken, the crucial questions to ask about pupils and about their education are… whether their abilities and aptitudes are being recognised and encouraged".

This paper argues that Marks does not afford enough weight to the impact the socio-economic background can have on a child's ability and aptitudes – private tuition, as excessively echoed throughout the paper, will positively impact a child's ability in a given area and thus suggests that social class is in fact a pivotal piece in the game of education and quite evidently assists a child up the educational ladder. However, the 30 years since the report arguably explain this difference in approach. Moreover, the workings of Gorard and Siddiqui (2018) have clearly established socio-economic factors as contributors to grammar school attendance coupled with their work being highly referenced and peer reviewed within the field has highlighted avenues for future research.

Kitchen and Hobbs (2016) draw on the findings of Levacic & Marsh (2007) and Atkinson et al., (2006) to conclude that students attending non-selective schools in selective areas scored lower at GCSE level compared to peers attending non-selective schools in non-selective areas. They provide this may be because of the "movement of high-quality teachers and other resources out of secondary moderns and into grammar schools" (Ibid). Culminating these factors together ultimately results in far less disadvantaged students attaining places at grammar schools thus leading to a greater proportion of them holding a state school place to which Peter Robinson noted in the TES (11/10/02) “If your child goes to a school surrounded by a lot of disadvantaged kids, your child is more likely to do less well”. This effect is further compounded when that child goes to a state school within a wholly-selective area – in such a case which the proportion of students achieving the governments expected performance standard at GCSE level drops to 47.7%, compared to the 96.7% achieved by students at selective state schools in the same areas (Andrews et al., 2016, p.29).

Andrews et al., further investigated student progress for peers of similar capabilities attending grammar schools compared to state schools in areas of varying selectivity (2016, p.31) The findings illustrate that as selectivity increases, the attainment gap widens, which is equivalent to an increase in half a GCSE grade in ten different subjects. After analysing the data for children of all backgrounds and prior attainment, the greatest divergence between attainment was between FSM children and non-FSM children irrespective of ethnic background – this would suggest that at some point throughout the grammar school selection process there is a barrier which hinders the disadvantaged. Impacts of colliding with such a barrier permeate throughout not only that child’s academic journey hindering their ability to perform as well as their peers at grammars at a KS3, KS4, A-Level and university entrance level but also potentially on a lifelong and life wide scale. In the final discussion focus of this thesis, the reasons why disadvantages students might be suffering from such an imbalance in education access is explored.

4.4 Why are disadvantaged students suffering such an imbalance in educational access.

In seeking to explore this question, it is clear there is a wide disparity in approach between that of the academic scholarship and the approach of the ‘societal consensus’. This paper considers whether it is this ideological rift that is attributable to the inadequacy of the government’s approach to tackling this problem – with the current approach to treating the imbalance of educational access on the part of the disadvantaged student seen as an educational funding one – in need of a 'quick fix' as opposed to requiring a deeper consideration of the root causes of the disparity and a reformulation of the infrastructure that facilitates the problem.

Rasbash et al., (2010) refer to the misconceptions held commonly by society such as the view that the educational outcomes and attainment gaps present currently (and historically) were purely based on the standard of education provided by a school ('scholastic activity') whereas scholarship would suggest that in fact 80% of the attainment variance is attributed to differing familial environmental factors. Despite many academics echoing this point (Williams, 2003; OFSTED, 2014; Demie, 2002) society persists with the view that purely scholastic change rather than a broader infrastructural change is needed. In fairness, this is not surprising given the nature of the problem in that resolutions that focus on scholastic change are generally more short-term (and thus more likely achievable in the near future) - which is exactly the type of support parents are seeking for their children in an educational environment that does not reward those who adopt a more long-term strategy. However, this myopic outlook is inhibiting the major infrastructural changes that is really needed to truly eradicate the attainment and opportunity gap.

To establish the root of these problems an identification of the earliest divergences must be undertaken and analysed to understand the cause of them, only this way will an effective resolution be able to be envisaged and implemented in the longer term. The Social Mobility Commission (2019) embarked upon this endeavour in an attempt to identify the earliest point of significant divergence and throughout their study emanations of disparity were consistent. As early as year one, the phonic attainment gap between FSM children and non-FSM children reflected a 14% difference in scores, this was further exacerbated by the end of Key Stage 1 in which this gap was now evident in reading, writing and mathematics – 18%, 20% and 18%

score differences respectively (Ibid, p.35). These problems continued to compound throughout KS2 resulting in only 46% of FSM students achieving the government expected standards compared to 68% of non-FSM pupils. Similar trends were observed between FSM and non-FSM students at the KS3, KS4 and A-Level standard. Evidently, disadvantaged students are experiencing educational barriers stemming from a wealth disparity as early as the age of 6.

In order to deduce whether these gaps began in the primary level of education, the Social Mobility Commission (2019, p.21) studied the prevalence of such gaps prior to primary school attendance. They concluded that a gap was created between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students even before they were born, with the gap then continually broadening as the child increases in age – by age 5 (starting ages of primary schools students) this attainment gap was 17% between those reaching the expected levels of development. However, the establishment of a gap prior to birth is hard to quantify for exactly that reason – how can a quantifiable measure be determined for an individual that has yet to be born? This study also found a direct correlation with this development and the socio-economic background of a family – with the most affluent experiencing the greatest development and the poorest experiencing the least development (Mobility Commission, 2019, p.24). An important factor in these differences related to the profession of the parents, which most commonly influences the socio-economic standing of the family at the point of having a child. Those in higher paying jobs were inherently more likely to be able to afford higher levels of childcare and better nurseries as well as being more likely to work less hours to spend more time with their children which has been identified by many academics as boosting the development of a child (Sylva et al., 2004, 2010, 2014). Ultimately, this led the Commission to conclude that parents in lower-paid jobs were less likely to put their children in quality nurseries or childcare which "further embed inequality" (2019, p.27).

Rowe & Godlin-Meadow (2009) reinforce this conclusion by stating that those at different socio-economic standpoints who decide to have children will experience differing levels of child development directly arising from their position. Not only does this provide a logical and coherent explanation as to the core root of the attainment gap but it provides reasoning as to the perpetuating nature of the problem in that those who are disadvantaged are more likely to have children that are disadvantaged and perform to a lesser standard than their peers meaning they are more likely to work a lower paying job thus fuelling the cycle (National Audit Office, 2015). This existence of the pre-life attainment and opportunity gap is one that has been subject to intense academic focus in the past few decades and adds credence to the notion that high-stake tests such as the 11-plus should be considerate of these factors and that their examination regimes do not widen these pre-existing gaps into chasms.

This is further compounded by the increasingly high stakes nature of GCSE and A Level examinations, if the 11-plus serves as the 'first' selection gateway, then the actual outcome of the 11-plus testing regime is first truly realised 5 years later in the GCSE examinations which are sat in year 11. At this point, the results are terminal and very much 'make or break' – students either achieve the grades needed to progress onto A-levels, Vocational Courses or Apprenticeship. While more contemporary routes such as 'T Levels' which combine classroom learning with on-the-job placements provide more options, it does not escape the fact that for many of those wishing to enter professional roles associated with the highest lifetime earnings (Montacute and Cullinane, 2018, p.8) that these examinations are extremely high-stake.

To this end, unless a greater degree of transparency and consistency in approach can be achieved, it is likely the existing 11-plus examination regimes across the UK will continue to be the subject of intense criticism and academic scrutiny. Arguably, the complex intricacies and interplay between societal attributes and educational access within the context of the 11-plus examinations in a capitalist and socially hierarchical country like England may prove simply too difficult to overcome resulting in disadvantaged students continuing to suffer educationally.

On the other hand, with a more positive outlook, it is my personal belief that providing disadvantaged students with an opportunity to access quality tuition will engender an environment in which bright, capable but disadvantaged students are provided a better chance of reaping the rewards (actual or perceived) offered by the selective schooling route. While I am a realist that accepts a genuine transformation will not occur until hard changes are introduced into all the examinations to reflect the inherent attainment gap present just from the nature of unbalanced and tiered society, I consider this to be the best alternative. From my own teaching and tutoring perspective, while only a very small percentage of my former tutees would have fallen into the FSM category, my experience with them was telling and ultimately was the driving force behind this thesis. I intend to finish this section of the discussion with one experience in the hope that this personal account will better impress the points made above within an actual lived experience.

Student A was attending a State primary school in South London. He lived with his mother, who was a single parent, who had moved over from France to work for the NHS. The student's school reports were positive, and he had been encouraged to sit the tests for the local grammar schools. The parent had been recommended 'peer tutoring' with another boy who was in their final year of their GCSEs to keep the prices of preparation low. However, I took on the tutelage of the boy at a heavily reduced cost, which was part subsidised by the boy's grandparents. Over 6 months, I tutored the boy an average of 1.5 hours a week and set approximately the same in homework. On the initial testing, the student scored 12% and 42% (Maths and English respectively) – for maths in particular, there were large chunks of the paper he had simply never come across before. Compared to my typical student (selective primary school, aiming for a grammar school place) the typical score was around 40-60% across both papers.

Due to the progression made under my tutelage, this bright but disadvantaged student won his places at grammar school, but in a twist of fate, he also sat the common entrance examinations (11+) and instead opted to take up a fully funded scholarship at a top local independent school – where he continues to excel to this day. I know that this amazing achievement would not have been possible but for my tutelage, and my meticulous keeping of exam performance metrics over this period would support this! In such cases, the educational attainment and opportunity gap so obviously present in this case, was bridged through the additional cost and expense of a quality tutor. With the above in mind, it is perhaps less eye-opening why I could virtually guarantee my tutees places at even the most selective grammar schools and private schools in the country – the vast majority of them already had a considerable advantage over their less fortunate peers – I was purely tasked with furthering this advantage and ensuring they scored as highly as possible. To understand and appreciate this within the wider educational framework would render only one sound, pragmatic conclusion to be squarely drawn – if we are serious about social mobility and narrowing the attainment gap, disadvantaged students must have regular and affordable (if not free!) access to quality tuition.

5. CONCLUSION

This thesis has involved a careful consideration of the literature and personal experiences of the author within the forum of private tuition. As originally envisaged in the introduction, the sheer magnitude of this topic and the interconnectedness it has with so many different tenets of educational research has rendered it almost impossible to make definitive and wide-reaching conclusions on any of these areas – purely due to the obvious word limitations and sheer complexity of the endeavor. That is not to mention the added difficulties in adding global perspectives from other countries, cultures, economies and educational institutions; combined with the author's own experiences and the risks to the research this brings. Nonetheless, I found the ability to reflect and inject insight into this process an incredibly rewarding and insightful one, that formed me to challenge my own beliefs and perceptions along the way in a way that a more traditional 'library' dissertation would not necessarily allow. However, despite and in light of the above, insight can still be gleamed despite the sheer expanse of the content covered, with a reminder of the research question provided below:

1. Whether private tuition in the UK is becoming more popular, and the extent to which reflects broader global trends;
2. Whether students from 'advantaged' or affluent backgrounds are more likely to receive private tuition than their disadvantaged peers;
3. Whether students receiving private tuition perform better than students not receiving private tuition and were therefore more likely to win places at grammar schools;
4. Whether the current state of affairs inhibits social mobility, both in relation to the lack of access to private tuition for disadvantaged students and in their lack of access to 'quality' private tuition.

Accordingly, the most important conclusions of this research are as follows:

1 Private tuition in the UK is becoming increasingly popular, which is reflected in global trends, and is being used progressively more as an effective (but costly) answer to the challenges of high-stake examinations such as the 11-plus;
2 That students from 'advantaged' or affluent backgrounds are more likely to receive private tuition than their disadvantaged peers;
3 That students receiving private tuition perform better than students not receiving private tuition and are therefore more likely to win places at grammar schools;
4 That the current state of affairs inhibits social mobility, which is not desirable, both in relation to the lack of access to private tuition for disadvantaged students, but also the lack of access to 'quality' private tuition.

In order to make these conclusions, this paper explored the literature around the concept of private tuition in the UK as a necessary part of the arsenal in the 'educational arms race'. This was considered against wider perspectives on private tuition and the shadow education sector, such as from countries like Japan, Nepal, the US, South Korea, India and Azerbaijan. It showed that despite the cultural variances, one common theme emerged over and over again – with a higher socio-economic standing, access to quality tuition became easier and more affordable which directly translated into measurable educational opportunity and attainment advantages for those students compared to their less advantaged peers. Likewise, it found a marked trend of private tuition being used increasingly more for high-stake testing such as entrance examinations, with families across the globe spending a greater proportion of their income on private tuition than ever before.

The thesis then traced the development of the 11-plus and the prevalence of grammar schools, finding that much of the criticism and controversy around the 11-plus today (namely the ability to be 'coached' for the test by a private tutor) can draw historical parallels from across the globe – such as in Japan, where the historical practice of going 'Ronin' and participating in other preparatory courses that greatly improve a student's examination success rate were very common. Unsurprisingly, these practices are generally not financially viable for disadvantaged students to pursue meaning an attainment gap is able to permeate across both time and location. It concluded that the sheer variance in 11-plus testing regimes across England would suggest no 'golden' approach had been achieved (or even that one is possible). It also, with reference to personal experience and literature, explored how the concept of the 11-plus being 'tutor proof' was nonsensical and unsupported – and how this draws away the momentum for the change that is urgently needed in this area – predominantly as a result of the politicisation of this area and the commercialisation of the testing process itself. Moreover, this thesis highlighted how the intellectual property asserted by many test providers over the 11-plus testing regimes created a lack of accountability, transparency, and openness – despite the best efforts of statisticians like James Coombs who has campaigned for the test data and scoring processes to be made available on public interest grounds (Coombs, 2020). The author considers this current state of affairs to be wholly unacceptable, and that no 'commercial interest' should supersede the need to have total transparency on a testing regime as important as the 11-plus.

Subsequently, the impact of privation tuition on educational outcomes for students sitting the 11-plus was explored to the extent that it illustrated a huge variation in GCSE achievement between similar students with differing levels of access to private tuition (National Audit Office 2015; Sutton Trust, 2016; Andrews et al., 2016). Likewise, the attainment and opportunity gaps that exist between students attending Grammar schools and their peers attending state schools was considered, with the conclusion made on the balance of literature available (in large part due to the recent 2020 GCSE and A-level grade debacle) that attending grammar school provides increased educational attainment opportunities, albeit there are also academics such as Gorard who would strongly dispute these assertions (Gorard and Siddiqui, 2018) especially when taking into account the typical demographic makeup of grammar school pupils This leads Gorard to conclude that "grammar schools in England endanger social cohesion for no improvement in overall results" (Gorard and Siddiqui, 2018, p.924). The above does not however account for the perception that grammar schools are 'better' – even if Gorard would contend this perception is a false one. Effectively, Gorard believes grammar schools perform better because of their selected and priviledged intake, and once these factors are taken account of, grammar schools 'are simply no better or worse' (Gorard and Siddiqui, 2018, p.924).

While this paper committed to not delving into this contentious debate, Gorard makes a monumental claim that I would quickly wish to touch upon. To my mind, Gorard makes a circular case, if grammar schools were not selective and did not have the type of generally better performing demographics within their makeup, then all schools would operate at the same level – in the same way that by analogy, if football clubs acquired players by lots, there would be no distinction in quality between Arsenal and Brighton. However, this is not the reality – richer clubs have more resources, scouts, better youth and development development facilities at their disposal, they are also better able to not only find 'home grown' talent but lock them into academy contracts from a young age.

In the same way, rich and affluent families are able to get their children in front of the scouts more often and into better youth clubs (private primary schools) and pay for the best coaches money can buy (private tutors) who know the professional process inside-out (exam coaching). With the above analogy in mind, Gorard's argument may be perceived as either circular and self-defeating or a classical 'straw man fallacy' – if all students were the same (no differences in demographic or background), and all access was the same (no selection), then all schools would be same. While this is admittedly a strong argument for the removal of grammar schools completely, it does not deal with the reality that grammar schools continue to exist, are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, with the 11-plus testing regime in the interim set to continue to disadvantage students from disadvantaged backgrounds and impede social mobility for those sections of society. Gorard's approach is the inverse of 'cracking a nut with a sledgehammer'.

While this is of course a highly contentious area, with some academics outright disputing this assertion, this thesis has adopted this approach for a number of reasons which will be detailed now. Primarily, there is a societal perception that students attending grammar schools will do better than students attending non-selective schools (thus the debate in the first place!) – therefore this perception could have value down the line of a student's life, particularly for job interviews and university interviews, such as Tonbridge Grammar School's specialist Oxford interview workshops (TGS, 2014). Second, that to hold the view that grammar schools and non-selective state schools present equal opportunity and attainment outcomes and therefore do nothing about it, and to be wrong, is more damaging than the inverse situation. Third, grammar schools have been around since the 16th Century, and modern grammar schools since 1944, so to not focus on 11-plus testing changes or improvements that need to be made on the basis that some kind of broader, grass roots institutional change is instead needed (which the author does not dispute) is not pragmatic with the issues we are faced with right now. Finally, lived experiences tend to trump facts and academic literature from the perspective of an individual (Holmberg et al., 2015) so the broad societal perception that grammar schools are more desirable than non-selective state schools renders the specifics of whether they actually are less important.

The paper then considered this from the perspective of disadvantaged students, finding a major disparity in the number of students in receipt of FSM attending grammar schools compared to non-selective state schools. It noted how disadvantaged students already receive less additional schoolwork (1.3 hours difference) and 18% less support with their homework from parents, when compared to more advantaged students. Likewise, with recent figures suggesting that

80% of disadvantaged students lack access to quality private tuition (Education Endowment Foundation, 2020) the paper considered the implications of this and how this was stifling social mobility.

The final focus of this paper was on the disproportionate impacts on educational attainment that disadvantaged students suffer as a result of their family's socio-economic background – which of course is completely out of their control. Concerningly, these impacts generally persist around the globe irrespective of attitudes or cultures, ultimately resulting in disadvantaged students having a far more limited access to educational resources. The thesis explored how this ultimately hinders their ability to access the higher echelons of education and society - thus stagnating social mobility for those originating from a disadvantaged background. The author also shared his own experience and strongly advocated how the role of private tuition can either supercharge existing advantage or can close the attainment gap. However, the nature of the industry (and the wider capitalistic society in which we live) being that the best quality tutors with the most impressive track records remain largely within the confines of the upper echelons of society who can more readily afford them - meaning it is almost certainly more likely to promote the widening than the narrowing. To this end, the author advocates for a quality and comprehensive online, digital solution that helps to prepare students for the 11-plus, regardless of background, budget, or pre-existing attainment level – with this supplemented by a minimum amount of private tuition for those classed as disadvantaged, as suggested by the Sutton Trust (Sutton Trust, 2017).

Finally, the paper considered a number of recent government initiatives such as the £1bn tuition fund. However, based on a preliminary consideration of the solutions being offered, this paper posits that many of these new initiatives are unlikely to impact the number of disadvantaged students accessing grammar school places and may even possibly decrease the numbers. This may happen as a result of an amalgamation of a number of different factors – the first being that the tuition is generally aimed at teaching mainstream curriculum and 'catching students up'(not 11-plus specific content) especially on account of the learning gap caused by Covid-19 and the educational inequalities, with the loss of the school environment most damaging to disadvantaged students (Slates et al., 2012) and that the families who are in receipt of this programme may be likely to hold the belief that the government provided tuition is ample for their child and thus do not seek specialised 11-plus examination tuition or test specific resources. Second, that the spurious claims that the 11-plus is 'tutor-proof' will continue to avail – despite the fact one of the main providers of the 11-plus test has refuted ever using that term, instead preferring 'tutor resistant' (ICO, 2020). This may instil a false sense of confidence in parents that other students will not be obtaining an advantage through the engagement with exam specific tutelage so neither should they.

Ultimately, this area continues to be a vibrant and interesting focal point for academics, politicians, and the wider society. There is a risk however, as evidenced first-hand in this thesis, that the sheer amount of content and complexity, coupled with the agendas and money involved, that a central message can be lost. Therefore:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of candour, until landmark grass-roots reform of our educational system is undertaken – if we are truly serious about social mobility and affording opportunities to those, through no fault of their own, who are born into hardship – we must do better and we must do more for our disadvantaged students by adopting the following recommendations.

- First, we must cast asunder the ridiculous notion that private tuition will not improve the chances of a student sitting an entrance examination, or that any test (especially the 11-plus) is tutor-proof or is capable of testing 'natural ability'.

- Second, to ensure disadvantaged students have access to quality tuition, focused on exam technique and to also build exam familiarity. Building on the recent funding pledges from the likes of the Welsh Government (£15m in 2021) into education technology, a digital solution to these should be pursued (which forms the focus of my ongoing PhD work). Given the challenges facing many disadvantaged families, this will also likely require provisions to be made for students to have access to the internet and a computer, laptop, ipad or other equivalent device to be funded by Central Government, the Local Authority or from the Pupil Premium Fund.
- Third, for all testing regimes to have specific provisions for disadvanted students (be it through a lowering of the weightings, 'pass' mark or similar) to account, as far as possible, for pre-test attainment disparity caused by private tuition and other factors;
- Fourth, all testing providers of the 11-plus must either provide unfettered and unfiltered access to their test results and workings to the public (or at the very least, authorised and independent academics tasked with checking their suitability) or be replaced by a government body. The notion that the 'commercial interests' of the test providers rank above the public interest in a matter of such fundamental public importance is absurd and in the author's opinion, represents a serious erring in the law that requires urgent judicial remedy.
- Fifth, that additional research be undertaken to explore the potential side effects and implications of implementing the above: for example, if private tutoring becomes a dominant form of learning as in South Korea, could this have implications for the quality of teaching in schools. Likewise, if tuition and exam-coaching continue to grow at the scale suggested in this paper, will the financial benefits and ease of provision (if online tuition remains commonplace) prove an irresistible draw to existing teachers, and how might this impact the quality and provision of teaching in their own classrooms.

Once these are achieved, we can then truly be proud of a testing regime that is fairer and affords the disadvantaged the right to throw their dice with a better chance to achieve their dreams and aspirations.

Spero Mox – Soon, I Hope!

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